

NIAGARA FRONTIER

Spring, 1958

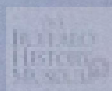
Eugene Speicher
by A. Conger Goodyear

The Georgian Bay Line

Joseph Ellicott's Big Family

Sand Bar at Buffalo Creek
by Marvin A. Rapp

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Sand Bar at Buffalo Creek

by Marvin A. Rapp

AT THE eastern end of Lake Erie, the Great Lakes spills its water into a kind of giant raceway for its mad rush to Niagara Falls. At Buffalo, where the lake meets the Niagara River, nature created certain physical conditions capable of eventual commercial development. As America moved westward, early nineteenth century men (often pioneers by water even more than by land) met this challenge by changing the contour and face of the land where it met the water. By so doing they helped to lay the foundation for Buffalo's maritime greatness.¹ In the century following, the Niagara frontier became a hub of transportation, with spokes reaching into every direction, drawing in and sending out by land, water, and eventually air, its products and people. But in the beginning, this was only potential.

Flood and freshet had filled the creek mouth with sand. As with most of the creeks that emptied into Lake Erie, a sand bar blocked the entrance into Buffalo Creek. Early mariners invariably sought the natural harbor of Black Rock, two miles north of Buffalo, on the Niagara River. At that point, however, the seven knot current of the Niagara River usually made it impossible for sailing craft and, later, even steamers to reach the lake on their return voyage without being towed up the river. Even so, this seemed preferable to casting anchor a half mile off Buffalo Creek and lightering the cargo by scows with a draft shallow enough to navigate the sand bar at the mouth of Buffalo Creek.

Consequently, the initial advantage for harbor and commercial development belonged to Black Rock. Still Buffalo's physical obstacles could be successfully overcome. As it turned out those of its rival could not. With the removal of the sand bar, Buffalo began to divert the lake traffic away from Black Rock, making the harbor at Buffalo the logical terminus of the Erie Canal. Location and the Erie Canal made Buffalo the greatest of the early lake ports.

To capitalize on every commercial advantage, the contour of the harbor has been greatly changed. Today, works of masonry, concrete, and stone, which form the modern harbor, would confuse and awe a mariner of 1800. The appearance of a large city built partially upon the swamp where he used to fish would further startle him.² Even the old mouth of Buffalo Creek, the entrance to the harbor, has been moved sixty rods south of its former confluence with the lake. In the early days the creek followed a course almost parallel with the lake. The small, sluggish, muddy stream of 1800, bearing little resemblance to its modern counterpart, meandered through a swampy alluvial plain not more than four or five feet above lake surface. Despite its unimpressive appearance, this serpentine creek became the basis for the harbor and port of Buffalo.³

2. Captain Augustus Walker, "Early Days on the Lakes and the Cholera Visitation of 1832," in Buffalo Historical Society *Publications*, V (1902), p. 290.

3. Maurice Kingsley, "History of the Buffalo Harbor, 1798-1884," ms. (Buffalo Historical Society); Captain Augustus Walker, "Early Days on the Lakes," p. 290. See also William Darby, "A Tour from the City of New York to Detroit in Michigan Territory Made Between the Second of May and the Twenty Second of September 1818," Grosvenor Library *Bulletin*, IX (June, 1929), p. 66.

1. "The workers were no longer willing to accept what they undertook to change—to improve—their environment." J. H. Beers (ed.), *History of the Great Lakes* (Chicago, 1899), I, p. 6.

Until the advent of harbor improvement in 1821, however, Buffalo Creek offered very little to the early mariner seeking a safe refuge for his ship and a place of transfer for his cargo. The position of the creek and the existence of the bar seriously impeded, if it did not completely block, navigation. Whereas most "streams along the lake [Erie] entered at about right angles with the lake shore making their entrance . . . direct and safe"⁴ Buffalo Creek did not. Frequent freshets and the movements of ice pushed the natural outlet of the creek northward, parallel to the lake shore. Captain James A. Sloan voiced the mariner's complaint of this situation:

Buffalo Creek previous to the construction of the harbor was exceedingly difficult to enter, a long outer bar confining its channel in shore, and causing its entrance into the lake nearly parallel with the shore. When the action of the sea, as was often the case, would confine the creek by shifting the bar in shore, the creek would then break through the bar, washing a better entrance into the harbor. It was always, however, unsafe to enter when there was a sea on the outer bar, even when there was sufficient water to do so. The channels made by the creek across the bar would gradually fill up again, thus causing a continual shifting of the channel of the creek by the action of the sea and current of the stream.⁵

This sand bar shifted with the vagaries of the flowing water. A three-foot depth of water proved an effectual barrier to all vessels except small canoes and bateaux. These found it possible to navigate some five miles up the creek.⁶ When a storm gripped the lake, pilots could not cross the bar. An account written in 1796 des-

cribes the perils entailed in an adventure of this kind:

Opposite to the mouth of Buffalo Creek, there is a very dangerous sand bar, which at times it is totally impossible to pass in any other vessel than bateaux; we found it no easy matter to get over it in the ship's long boat with four oars, on going into the creek; and in returning the passage was really tremendous. The wind, which was westerly, and of course impelled the vast body of water in the lake towards the mouth of the creek, had increased considerably whilst we had been on shore, and the waves had begun to break with such fury over the bar, that it was not without a considerable share of terror that we contemplated the prospect of passing through them; the commodore of the King's ships on the lake, who was at the helm, was determined, however, to cross the bar that night, and accordingly, a strict silence having been enjoined, that the crew might hear his orders, we boldly entered into the midst of the breakers; the boat now rolled about in a most alarming manner; sometimes it mounted into the air on the top of the mighty billows, at other times it came thumping down with prodigious force on the bar; at last it stuck quite fast in the sand; neither oars nor rudder were any longer of use, and for a moment we gave ourselves over for lost; the waves that rolled toward us broke on all sides with a noise like that of thunder, and we were expecting that the boat would be overwhelmed by some one or other of them every instant, when luckily a large wave, that rolled on a little farther than the rest without breaking into foam, set us again afloat, and the oarsmen making at that moment the most

4. Captain James A. Sloan, "A Pioneer Trader," in Buffalo Historical Society *Publications*, V (1902), p. 235.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 234-235.

6. Samuel Wilkeson, "Beginning of Buffalo Harbor," Buffalo Historical Society *Publications*, V (1902), p. 186.

vigorous exertions, we once more got into deep water; it was not, however, until after many minutes that we were safely out of the tremendous surf. A boat, with a pair of oars only, that attempted to follow us, was overwhelmed in an instant by a wave which broke over her; it was in vain to think of attempting to give any assistance to her crew, and we were obliged for a time to endure the painful thought that they might be struggling with death within a few yards of us; but before we lost sight of the shore we had the satisfaction of beholden [*sic*] them all standing in safety on the beach, which they had reached by swimming.⁷

Besides the results of daily weather changes, the unpredictable seasonal fluctuations in the level of the lake, at times from four to six feet, made the danger of the sand bar at the mouth of Buffalo Creek more acute. In September, 1809, a farmer from the interior lake region found the water so unusually low that he drove his cattle from Huron, near Sandusky, to Buffalo along the lake shore, crossing every stream by wading save Rock River. This rise and fall of Erie's waters caused as much speculation by the American public as it did trouble to the lake captains. Newspapers and magazines discussed the lake undulations, offered explanations and sought scientific answers. *Niles' Register* carefully recorded each discrepancy in level and never failed to speculate on the cause. In 1816, the *Register* stated that the level of the lake had started to subside after gently and regularly rising for three and a half years to a level of three or four feet above its "customary" height. Even the government took cognizance of this peculiar phenomenon and asserted that "in or about the years 1806, 1820, 1830, and

1838 the waters rose to a considerable elevation and again gradually subsided during the intermediate years."⁸

In addition to these long-term trends, sudden tide-like changes inflicted great damage and inconvenience upon the lake marine. Erroneously, some described these sudden changes as "tidal waves." Actually these are due primarily to large atmospheric changes noticeable upon the barograph preceding, during, and after thunder storms.⁹ As early as 1730 this phenomenon on Swiss lakes, where the water apparently dried up or receded upon one side of the lake and rose on the other side, had been observed by scientists. They called it *seiche*. According to observations, atmospheric pressure at the extremities of the lake, caused these great fluctuations, augmented by the lake gales. These undulations enlarged as they reached the narrower and shallower portions of a bay.¹⁰ These sudden changes

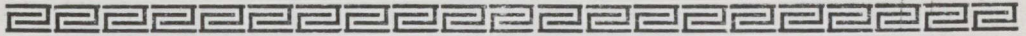
8. *Report of the Board of Engineers*, 1845, 30 Cong., 2 Sess., Doc. 23, p. 9; quoted in Maurice Kingsley, *History of Buffalo Harbor*, ms., *Niles' Register*, XI (December 7, 1816), p. 238; *House of Representatives Executive Documents*, 1838, 25 Cong., 3 sess., no. 2, p. 360.

9. J. H. Beers, *History of the Great Lakes*, I, p. 43.

10. "... when the lake undulations become large and rapid, so do the atmospheric waves recorded upon the barograph. The lake level is never stationary; the smallest movements recorded were from one half an inch to one inch. The longitudinal and traverse 'seiches' are due to great differences of atmospheric pressure between the extremities of the lake which are doubtless augmented when the gale strikes the surface of the water. They occur shortly before and during and for several days after the passage of a severe storm. The average time interval of the movements for Lake Ontario is about four hours and forty-nine minutes, respectively.

"The small undulations are due to the direct action of the atmospheric waves as they move over the surface of the lake, tending to form minute undulations upon the surface and as they move further into a bay become magnified as they reach narrower and shallower portions of the bay, until finally they assume

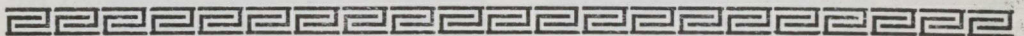
7. Isaac Weld, Jr., in "Mirror of Buffalo," (compiled by Frederick J. Shepard), *Grosvenor Library Bulletin*, XI (December, 1928), p. 28.



Adult Western

(western new york style)

- ❖ YOU have noticed that this Society recently furnished papers about the Indians of the Tuscarora and Seneca reservation to government people. The Indians, too, have come to us for help.
- ❖ WILL the good guys or the bad guys win? We don't have any notion, but we are glad to help — the good guys, of course. But we want to say that we couldn't have helped but for the work of the persons who kept these papers and looked after them all these years.
- ❖ WHAT are you and we doing about the records being made today that will come in handy another time? And maybe about white folks: business people, government guys, working stiffes, teachers, lawyers, doctors, and just you and me.
- ❖ EVERYBODY is breaking into history. It seems as though people want to know more about more people. Life is getting like that.
- ❖ MAYBE it's your stuff that is needed. Will you consult us? Those diaries, letters, account books, notes and journals may be something for another "western" some day.



often caused disaster. More often, however, they were amusing. On a calm, warm, May day in 1825, a fall of three feet in the level of the water in Buffalo harbor made difficulty for at least two vessels. Captain Sloan, by the use of setting poles, had succeeded in propelling his boat, *Sally*, over the Buffalo Creek sand bar. Suddenly a flow of water out of the creek checked the forward motion of the boat. The Captain and crew soon found their ship under sternway in the lake. They finally succeeded in getting their lines over the piles to check her. Another boat, the *Abigail*, then being repaired in the harbor, partially capsized, spilling its entire salt cargo into the creek.

This same Captain had had a similar experience in 1817, while on a trip to Grand River. In the course of business, he put in at Point Abino on the Canadian shore. A few minutes after landing, he noticed that the water in the bay was falling quite rapidly. Immediately the men hastened to move the boat into deep water. It was already too late. The water had fallen two feet making it possible to walk around the boat on bare ground! The inhabitants of the Point assured the Captain that the "tide" would flow back in an hour and in just that length of time it did.¹¹ These sudden fluctuations were as frequent as the storms on the lake and that, apparently, was frequent enough to increase the hazard of the sand bar.

Even after the construction of the first artificial harbor at Buffalo, in 1822, the shallow depth of the water there continued to cause the mariners a considerable amount of inconvenience. As a

proportions recorded on the instrument.

"These undulations become rapid and of great amplitude during fine weather many hours before the approach of a storm from the Southern States, while on the other hand they are at a minimum preceding and during fine, settled weather." J. H. Beers, *op. cit.*, I, p. 43.

11. Captain James A. Sloan, "A Pioneer Trader," in Buffalo Historical Society *Publications*, V (1902), p. 232.

matter of fact, the first ship to sail through the new channel had an embarrassing mishap due to the shallow water. The channel had been created, among other reasons, to permit the steamer *Superior* to sail from the upper part of Buffalo Creek where it had been constructed. A date was set for the first sailing and the contractors promised the builders of the ship that they would pay a fine for each extra day that the *Superior* was confined to the creek due to the bar. The day of the trial run had arrived and all the people from Buffalo and some from Black Rock crowded on board. The ship sank lower and lower until finally it rested on the floor of the harbor. The captain was forced to ask some of the people to leave the ship and walk to the end of the pier. Thus lightened, the ship crossed the bar. After picking up the passengers at the end of the pier, the *Superior* proceeded up the lake, with bugles sounding and banners flying.¹²

Besides the danger of shallow water, other natural factors proved frequently unkind and occasionally disastrous to the navigator of Lake Erie. One of these was the wind — in sailing a help and at times a hindrance. Its course usually started in the southeast and gradually worked itself around through the south to the west and northwest. If the barometer rose when the wind reached this latter point, then it would "blow a gale." A gale from the southwest at times caused a vertical rise of nine feet in the level of the lake at Buffalo harbor, sufficient to submerge a great portion of the lower part of the village. On the other hand, quite the opposite effect might be caused by a northeastern wind which drops the level of the water at this point. These gales would lash the harbor at Buffalo with

12. Samuel Wilkeson, "Historical Writings," in Buffalo Historical Society *Publications*, V (1902), p. 214.

[Five]

unabated fury, usually resulting in considerable damage and loss of life.¹³

Most of the early schooners and sloops brought their careers to a premature end by being caught in the teeth of one of Erie's gales. A violent storm in the year 1835 flooded the entire lower flats of Buffalo, east of Main Street, extending nearly to Seneca Street. The inundated section presented the appearance of an immense lake "furiously raging, threatening destruction to the inhabitants of that section." All day and all night boats rescued people from their homes where they had been marooned. The water swept away the houses in the shore area and greatly damaged and partially destroyed the merchandise piled on the wharves of the harbor. During these violent storms even water spouts were noticed. Even as it does today, the wind whipped the village with great ferocity. The memoirs of an early inhabitant of the village contains the following account:

It was nearly as necessary in a gale to strap and lash oneself for safety, as for the sailor to be lashed to the mast when tempest driven on the seas. As for hats! It was no unusual thing to see a dozen or more at one time wildly careening up, down, and across the street, and men rushing from all directions in frantic efforts to rescue their windtossed headgear. The sight was comical.

In 1813, Niles wrote, "We are daily becoming better acquainted with the many interesting particulars of these inland seas. The winds upon them appear much more uncertain than they are on the ocean; they are also more subject to storms." Two years later, after reporting a great many of the shipwrecks and storms on the lakes, the editor chose to call them the "storm vexed lakes." The shallowness of the lake, easily disturbed by the prevailing westerly winds caused

the wave violence of Erie's storms. The depth of the lake varies from 100 to 270 feet. In prehistoric times, the now shallow Erie basin was a portion of a plain, across which the ancient Erigan river flowed in a valley 200 feet or more in depth. This ancient river flowed into the Ontario basin through a channel about forty miles west of the Niagara river. Farther east, it joined the Laurentian river, the forefather of the present St. Lawrence river.¹⁴

Like a violent wind, ice hazards also hindered shipping facilities at Buffalo harbor. Ice bound the harbor for about four months of every year. Traffic usually opened in the latter part of April or the first part of May and closed in the latter part of November or the first part of December.¹⁵ Once built, the Erie canal enjoyed about the same period of operation. Oftentimes boats, unfortunate enough to be caught in the ice, were crushed. Those which ventured forth at the beginning of the season frequently suffered damage in attempting to break a channel through the ice. One traveler wrote:

Several steamboats were injured in the fruitless attempt to get through the ice. The *Ohio* tried it, broke both paddles and so damaged her engine that three days were required to repair it. The second effort was more successful. A channel was formed through which the vessels could pass. The steamers *Thomas Jefferson*, *Ohio*, *Governor Marcy*, and *Charles Townsend*; brigs *Illinois* and *Indiana*; schooners *Huron*, *Michigan*, and *Barker* immediately

14. *Niles' Register*, XLIX (November 6, 1838), p. 188; V (November 6, 1813), p. 172; XVI (July 17, 1819), p. 347; Martha F. Poole, "Social Life in Earlier Buffalo (in 30's and 40's)," in Buffalo Historical Society *Publications*, VII (1905), p. 487; *Merchants' Magazine*, III (September 1840), p. 217; J. H. Beers, *History of the Great Lakes*, I, p. 8.

15. *New York Annual Register* (1840), 342; *Merchants' Magazine*, VI (March, 1842), p. 285.

13. J. H. Beers, *History of the Great Lakes*, I, p. 45; *House of Reps. Exec. Docs.*, 1838, 25 Cong., 3 Sess., no. 2, p. 359.

hoisted sail, and Friday, May 8th, with a strong northeasterly wind we left Buffalo. Our Brig (*Illinois*) was a first rate sailor. She dashed gallantly through the ice, cleared it all before her, passed every vessel, and in an hour's time was fairly upon the broad bosom of the lake.¹⁶

The Buffalo papers anxiously watched each spring for signs of the ice breakup. A newspaper announcement generally heralded the opening of the harbor and lake, not unlike this one which appeared in the *Buffalo Journal*, May 19, 1829:

The ice left us last week, and its departure was immediately followed by the merry shouts of our mariners and the joyous carol of the boatmen. Eighteen canal boats arrived in a single day, many of them after much detention at Black Rock, by ice in the harbor, and 27 sail of vessels were counted in our harbor Sunday last. The carrying trade has opened with great activity, Steamboats, Schooners, and every species of water craft being fully employed. Cargoes of merchandise are constantly arriving for western destination and shipments of produce from the west in rapid succession.¹⁷

Then, like a huge bear awakening from a winter's sleep, the port of Buffalo stretched its limbs, emitted a loud and vigorous yawn, and went about the business of making a living. Usually activity had already started on the upper part of the lake before Buffalo was ice free. Since the current of the lake flows toward Buffalo, tons of ice from the upper lake jam into the neck of the Niagara river a few miles north of Buffalo creek, clogging lake, river and harbor.¹⁸ Once the thaw sets in the lake, the current helps to clear the lake.

16. Ellen Bigelow, "Letters Written By A Peoria Woman in 1835," *Illinois Historical Society, Journal*, XXII, #2 (1929), p. 343.

17. *Buffalo Journal*, May 19, 1829.

18. *Ibid.*, April 3, 1827; *Merchants' Magazine*, III (September, 1840), p. 217.

Fog, too, added to the hazards of the lake boat captains. Frequently it delayed them in making port. In the log book of the schooner *Nicholas Biddle*, Daniel Dobbins, master, on a trip from Cleveland to Buffalo in 1838, after passing Sturgeon Point, made the following entry: "Nine forty five hauled on a wind (S.W.) for fog to clear; 11 cleared up; squared away for Buffalo light. Arrive at 1½ A.M. Canal boats very scarce. Ends pleasant." Fog, wind, storm, and ice have always harassed the navigator. Today with charts, lighthouses, artificial harbors, fog horns, and advance weather reports, however, the captain is better able successfully to surmount these. In the early days of shipping on the lakes, without such aids, landmarks were the only guide.¹⁹ Great skill, and not a little luck, were the ingredients for a safe voyage.

The possibilities of a harbor at Buffalo creek were early recognized. Some of the settlers who formed the wilderness community near the mouth of Buffalo creek understood its potential once the sand bar was removed. They realized too that until that time its northern neighbor, the port of Black Rock, would progress while Buffalo, comparatively, stood still. As early as 1803, Louis Le Couteulx, a surveyor for the Holland Land Company, stopped as a guest at Crow's Inn situated on the creek. He wrote to Joseph Ellicott, "... there is a probability of making a good harbor at Buffalo in spite of the bar which is at its entrance, I am sure that Yankees can remove it, if Hollanders will not undertake it." Le Couteulx had great imagination or keen foresight, he not only saw the necessity and possibility of dredging out the bar, he also allowed himself to enjoy the fanciful speculation of a canal from the mouth of Buffalo creek to Black

19. "Dobbins Papers, Narrative by Captain William Dobbins," Frank Severance (ed.), in *Buffalo Historical Society Publications*, VIII (1905), p. 299.

Rock. Both eventually came to pass—evidence that the possibilities were inherent in the terrain for those who had an eye keen enough to see them.²⁰

Another man with equal insight was Judge William Cooper, of Cooperstown, father of the famous writer and in his own right an author. His geographical treatise, *A Guide in the Wilderness*, laid down certain factors of location necessary for the success of future cities. After traversing the state of New York in search of these favorable locations, he at last stood in the “stillness of the wilderness at the end of Lake Erie” where the feeling of latent resources surrounding him caused him later to write, “The situation most conspicuously advantageous is the mouth of the Buffalo Creek on Lake Erie.” Then, too, the Buffalo harbor had a capacity for expansion not true of Black Rock. The lake basin, just off the mouth of Buffalo creek generally remained calm except during storms. This made it quite possible to enlarge the harbor facilities by the use of breakwalls and artificial slips as needed. Even in the early days before the construction of breakwalls, ships would anchor in this basin half a mile off the mouth of the creek and transfer their cargo from the ships to lighters or scows to be taken across the bar into the Buffalo creek. This business of transferring called “lightering” was monopolized by Winthrop Fox, who alone possessed the facilities for carrying on this work.²¹

The exorbitant price of lightering, the time lost, and the danger of an unexpected squall while anchored in the open lake

forced most of the captains to sail down the Niagara river to the “natural” port at Black Rock. This harbor was naturally protected. The transfer of goods could be made easily from the ship to the dock with no extra cost, no danger of loss, and no waste of time. But in spite of the fact that Black Rock enjoyed the better natural facilities, it contained certain fatal defects that could not be rectified. As business increased and ships grew larger, the little harbor at Black Rock proved too cramped for the mariners. After Buffalo built its artificial harbor, skippers preferred its ample room.

In addition to its small port, Black Rock was handicapped by the swift current of the Niagara river. Sailing vessels needed at least a ten-knot breeze before they could successfully stem the current of the river. Ships were rarely favored with such a breeze. Consequently, the ships had to be towed from Black Rock to the lake. This towing process developed into a regular business, employing from eight to fourteen yoke of oxen. It was called, quite descriptively, the “horned breeze.” Captain Augustus Walker wrote the following account of the operation:

This enterprise was almost always superintended by Sheldon Thompson, it being an operation that required much care and judgment, both in management of this long team as well as the manner of securing the hawser to the masthead, and the necessary number of boats that served to buoy up the hawser, between the ship and the shore, as well as their relative position. These boats (some dozen in number) were built expressly for that purpose. They were placed about fifty feet apart, the hawsers used were from 200 to 300 fathoms long. . . . As a general thing these vessels were towed nearly to the mouth of our present harbor (Buffalo), and when the tow line was cast off it required no small amount of

20. Harold S. Kemp, “Queen City of the Lakes: A Geographic Pageant,” in George Miller (ed.), *Human Geographic Studies of the United States*, (Bloomington, Ill., 1935), pp. 5-6; Robert W. Bingham, *The Cradle of the Queen City*, (Buffalo, N. Y., 1931), pp. 184-185.

21. Kemp, “Queen City of the Lakes,” pp. 2, 4; Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New England and New York* (New Haven, 1822), IV, p. 68; Captain Augustus Walker, “Early Days on the Lakes,” p. 291.

labor to haul on shore and coil away in boats that length of cordage and get it back again to Black Rock.²²

The sand bar at the mouth of Buffalo creek could be removed and an artificial harbor built. At Black Rock, however, the swift current of the Niagara river and the limited space of the Black Rock harbor could never be overcome. The difficulty of turning around in that harbor, and the danger of being swept into the current of the Niagara river soon diverted

the lake traffic to the Buffalo harbor.

Today one metropolitan area occupies the end of Lake Erie. Black Rock has been swallowed up by its former rival, Buffalo. The reason is still location, "this time a refinement of location since the two miles which separated the two villages are of little moment in themselves." But in those two miles is the answer to Buffalo's success and Black Rock's failure.²³ Buffalo could improve its advantages and remove its disadvantages. Black Rock could do neither.

22. Walker, "Early Days on the Lakes," pp. 303-304.

23. Kemp, "Queen City of the Lakes," p. 8.

Joseph Ellicott's Big Family

by William Chazanof

ONE of the rising political figures who sought additional power in western New York was Erastus Granger. He first appeared in Buffalo during the election campaign of 1804. Prior to this, Granger had lived in Connecticut, where he had vigorously supported Thomas Jefferson. Moreover, Granger had the good fortune to have as a cousin, Gideon Granger, the Postmaster-General in Jefferson's cabinet. Because of Erastus Granger's industry and his cousin's prominent political position, Jefferson appointed him Superintendent of Indian Affairs.

Joseph Ellicott's contact with Erastus Granger for the Holland Land Company began during the series of conferences and discussions that were held over the disposition of Company land to the Tuscarora Indians. The Tuscaroras had fled from North Carolina in 1711 and had joined the Iroquois Confederacy a year later. Living on the territory of the Senecas, the Tuscaroras had not received land for their reservation in the 1797 Treaty of Big Tree. The Holland Land Company and the Senecas, therefore, each donated two miles square to the Tusca-

roras. This grant was not sufficient, so the Tuscaroras sought more. However, when the Tuscaroras in 1803 applied for the purchase of land from the Company, they had to obtain the advice and approval of the federal government, before they could buy it. Henry Dearborn, Secretary of War, had the duty of advising the Tuscaroras on the wisdom of such a purchase. In this case, the Secretary of War gave his opinion that the Company was asking too high a price.¹

Dearborn's action so disconcerted Paul Busti that the Agent-General angrily responded to the Secretary of War. He did not realize, Busti heatedly told Dearborn, that the Secretary of War's advice to the Indians was based on his judgment whether the Company price was a just one. "[I] felt a little mortified in observing," Busti complained to Dearborn, "that your advising the Tuscarora Indians to

1. Turner, *Pioneer History of the Holland Purchase of Western New York*, pp. 177-183; Henry Dearborn to Joseph Ellicott, Nov. 29, 1803, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society; Dearborn to Paul Busti, January 16, 1804, *ibid*.

purchase or not, would depend on your being convinced that the ultimate price asked by the Holland Land Company is a fair one."² Busti maintained that the price of the land was justified and objected to Dearborn's decisive role in blocking the sale. But the Secretary of War clung to his position and insisted that it was his task to protect the Indians against their buying land at prices that he judged to be "considerably too high."

Dearborn's position prevented the consummation of the sale of land to the Tuscaroras so Busti sought help to complete the transaction. It was only natural that he should turn to Erastus Granger, who had just assumed the office of Superintendent of Indian Affairs. In February 1804, Busti talked with Granger in Philadelphia in an effort to enlist his support; he, however, agreed with Dearborn's original opinion that the "prices and conditions appeared too high." Busti persisted in his plans for this sale, and urged Ellicott to try to influence Granger to take action favorable to the Holland Land Company. Ellicott and Granger met in March to discuss the projected sale. Ellicott now learned that part of the trouble stemmed from Oliver Phelps, the 1804 candidate for lieutenant-governor and friend of Burr, whom Ellicott had opposed. Granger claimed that Phelps had suggested to Dearborn that the Company had asked too high a price for the land. Phelps "insinuated to the Secretary of War," explained Ellicott to Busti, "that the Price we asked the Tuscarora Indians for the Lands near Niagara was unfair. That Gentleman alleged to the Secretary of War that \$1.50 per Acre ought and would be considered a very high price."³

After considerable discussion, Ellicott succeeded in convincing Superintendent

of Indian Affairs Granger that the price asked by the Holland Land Company was a fair one, and that the conduct of Phelps was highly irregular. Granger therefore decided to support Ellicott. Thus, with the assistance of Granger, the Holland Land Company finally completed the sale. The Tuscaroras purchased 4,329 acres of land, paying the the Company \$13,722. The money came from a trust fund held by the United States as a result of a settlement of the Indian claims against North Carolina. The decisive role that Granger had played in that affair earned for him the gratitude of Ellicott and Busti.⁴

After his participation in the Tuscarora purchase, Granger sought to advance himself further. On September 3, 1804, he became the first postmaster of New Amsterdam (Buffalo) and held this office without interruption until 1818. He also accepted the position of financial agent in 1804 for some of the Seneca Indian chiefs; this job required Granger to receive the annuities of these chiefs and to turn over the money to the Indian leaders. Since these annuities were paid by the Holland Land Company, Ellicott again came in contact with Granger and successfully developed working relationships that proved to be exceedingly harmonious. Indeed, Ellicott was so pleased with Granger's co-operation that he demonstrated his gratitude by selling him three choice lots in Buffalo at a low price.⁵

In addition to his friendly relations with the politically important Erastus Granger, Joseph Ellicott got along well with other western New York politicians. Alex Rea, for example, had come under

2. Paul Busti to Henry Dearborn, Jan. 20, 1804, *ibid.*

3. Paul Busti to Joseph Ellicott, Feb. 8, 1804, *ibid.*; Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, May 14, 1804, *ibid.*

4. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, May 18, 1804, *ibid.*; Paul Busti to Joseph Ellicott, May 30, 1804, *ibid.*; Turner, *Pioneer History of the Holland Purchase of Western New York*, p. 183.

5. Erastus Granger to Joseph Ellicott, Sept. 6, 1804, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society.

obligation to Ellicott soon after the latter became Resident-Agent. In 1801, Rea humbly solicited from Ellicott "any job he may have to offer next season." Two months later, Rea went to work for the Resident-Agent. Rea added to his obligations to Ellicott by borrowing money from him. Already \$250 in debt to him, Rea asked Ellicott in 1804 for an additional loan of \$80. The job and loan paid large dividends to Ellicott, for Alex Rea soon rose in political stature. He had progressed from assessor and Commissioner of highways for the town of Batavia, in 1803, to Supervisor of the same town one year later. The voters then elected Rea to the State Assembly in 1804, and re-elected him to that office until 1808; in that year, the electorate sent him to the State Senate where he served two terms, ending in 1817. The Assembly in 1809 elected him to the Council of Appointment.

When Alex Rea acquired a position of considerable political strength, he was quite ready to pay back Ellicott for his earlier favors to him. As soon as he gained the seat in the State Assembly, Rea sought Ellicott's advice on law-making matters. "I shall also be glad to have your concile [*sic*]," he told the Resident-Agent, "on Legislative business." Furthermore, Rea recognized Ellicott's paramount role in the choosing of candidates for county position by informing him: "I would be glad to have any nominations that may be forwarded as soon as it was convenient. I presume they will mostly come through your hands." On several occasions, Rea repeated this same type of request to Ellicott: "I would wish you to make the nomination." Rea even offered to do whatever Ellicott desired, assuring the Resident-Agent: "Should you have any commands to Albany I will be happy to serve you."⁶

6. Alex Rea to Joseph Ellicott, January 10, 1801, February 3, December 22, 1804, *ibid.*

Another western New York politician who co-operated with Joseph Ellicott was Joseph Annin. A state senator from Aurelius, who served in the upper house from 1803 through 1820, Annin, like Alex Rea, willingly granted favors to Ellicott. Grateful for Ellicott's support in the early stages of his career, Annin often waited for Ellicott to choose the nominees for county posts, and offered to use his senatorial influence in the promotion of people whom the Resident Agent wanted.⁷

Thus, Ellicott had worked out arrangements with several politicians from western New York and, in the main, these men co-operated with him. Granger, Rea, and Annin supported Ellicott in many matters, and their loyalty proved to be of considerable assistance in the operations of Holland Land Company policies.

Once he had established a co-operative climate with other politicians, Ellicott felt that he now needed the loyalty of family relations to assist him to direct his political affairs. For, as the number of land sales increased, Ellicott's tasks as Resident-Agent rose proportionately, and he had correspondingly less time in which to care personally for his numerous obligations. Moreover, as the settlers spread out and populated the various parts of the vast Purchase, he alone could not possibly maintain the close contact with local political figures so essential to an understanding of the residents' political thoughts. If Ellicott wished to fulfill adequately his duties as Resident-Agent and also to continue to attend to his political needs, he required the most trusted help. For this kind of support, Joseph Ellicott turned to his family.

By the common consent of his three brothers and five sisters, Joseph Ellicott gradually had become head of the family. After his father had died in 1780, Joseph had kept in close touch with his mother, had invited her to live with him in

7. Joseph Annin to Ellicott, March 8, 1803, January 17, April 18, 1804.

Batavia, and had looked after her needs until she had passed away. Three of the Ellicott sisters married three Evans brothers, and of the other two girls, one died unmarried at the age of twenty-four, and the other married a Thomas Brown. His brothers Andrew and David were older than Joseph, but Andrew became a mathematics instructor at West Point and did not acquire either the economic or the political power of Joseph, and David disappeared under mysterious circumstances. Benjamin, the fourth brother, worked with Joseph for the Holland Land Company; they kept their profits in separate accounts. Since both men remained bachelors, they lived together. While the rest of the family lived too far apart for frequent meetings, its members corresponded with one another regularly and concerned themselves with each other's welfare. Lacking children of his own, Joseph frequently turned to the families of his brothers and sisters for the intangible comforts of a home atmosphere. With this background of close ties, Joseph considered it extremely wise to recruit from among his family and their relations the lieutenants that he needed to share his political and economic responsibilities in western New York.⁸

One of the family on whom Joseph Ellicott became very dependent was his nephew, David Ellicott Evans. In 1803, David Evans, the son of Rachael Ellicott Evans, (the twin sister of Benjamin Ellicott) had left his home in Maryland and had come to Batavia at the age of fifteen. Starting as a clerk in his uncle Joseph's office, he made rapid progress and was soon promoted to cashier and then to accounting clerk. As a result of his close associations with Ellicott, Evans learned the intricate details of the land business

as well as the political and economic problems of western New York. Then, with his uncle's approval, Evans ran for the State Senate in 1818. Elected as a senator, he promoted the best interests of his uncle and the Holland Land Company. Evans frequently sought his uncle's guidance, beginning each request for advice by stating: "I would wish your advice on . . ." Evans continued in politics and won a seat in Congress in 1826, but resigned his post the following year when the Company appointed him to an important administrative position. For many critical years, Evans worked closely with Ellicott, who so greatly respected the ability of his nephew that he granted him power of attorney to transact all of his personal business.⁹

While Ellicott watched with pride the steady advancement of his nephew David Evans, the Resident-Agent was also impressed by the work of William Peacock. Peacock had entered the Company's services in 1803, beginning as a clerk in the Batavia office under the exacting tutelage of the Resident-Agent. In 1804, Peacock, a skilled surveyor, laid out the street arrangement for much of the village of Buffalo, and then performed the same tasks for the county seats of Mayville and Ellicottville. Several years later, he also marked the boundaries of most of the towns of Chautauqua County. In 1807, William Peacock officially joined the Ellicott family when he married Joseph's niece, Ann Ellicott Evans. He continued to climb in the Company, and in 1810 Ellicott sent him to Mayville, the county seat of Chautauqua, where he became a sub-agent directly responsible to the Resident-Agent. He held this office until the Company sold the last of its land in 1836. Peacock, like Evans, became in-

8. Charles W. Evans, comp., *Biographical and Historical Accounts of the Fox, Ellicott, and Evans Families* (Buffalo: Baker, Jones and Company, 1882), pp. 24, 25, 27; Clara L. T. Williams, *Joseph Ellicott and Stories of the Holland Purchase* (Batavia, 1936), p. 11.

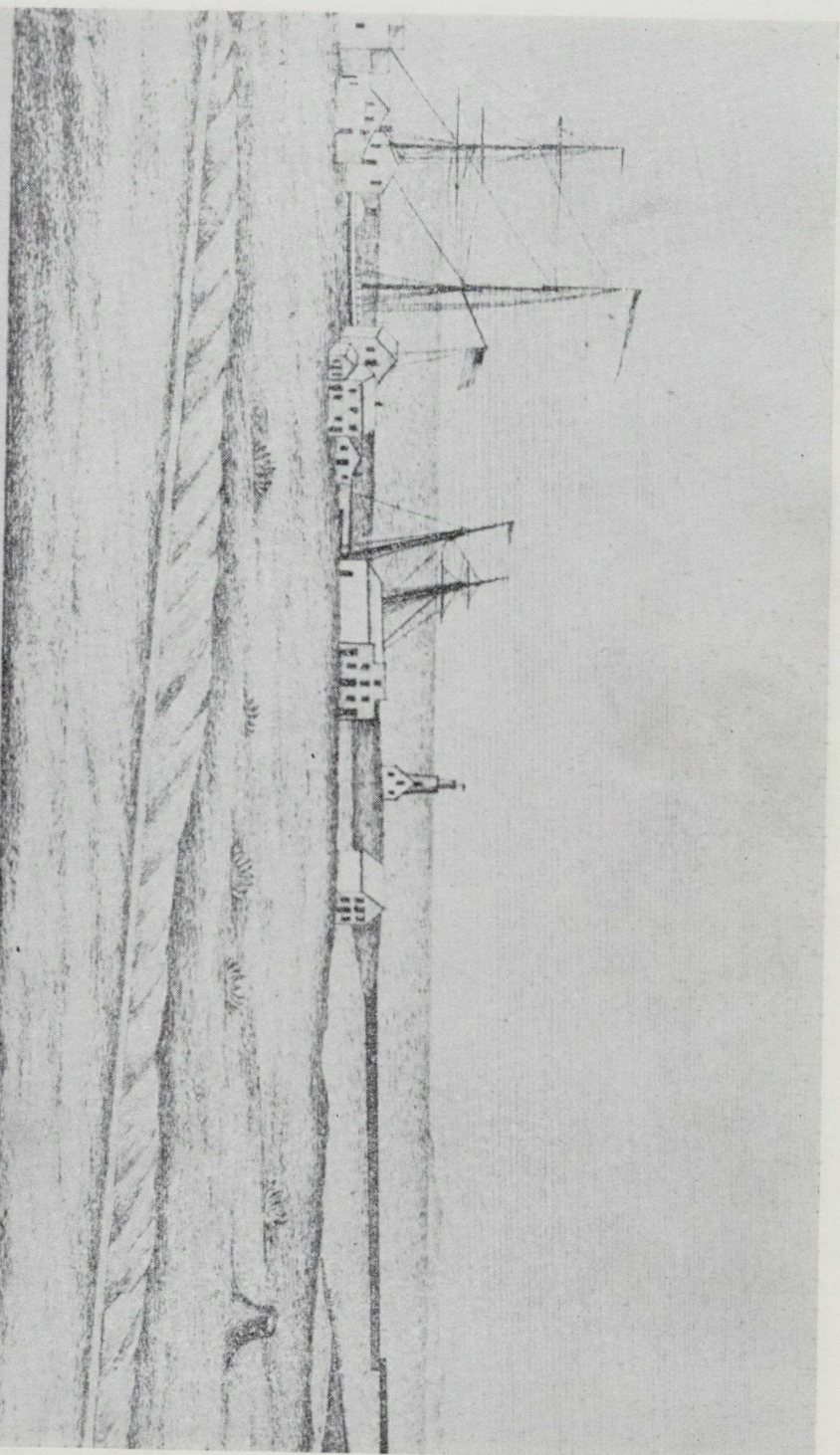
9. David Evans to Ellicott, September 21, 1809, January 7, February 5, 1819; Ellicott to DeWitt Clinton, March 18, 1818; Turner, *Pioneer History of the Holland Purchase*, pp. 442-444.

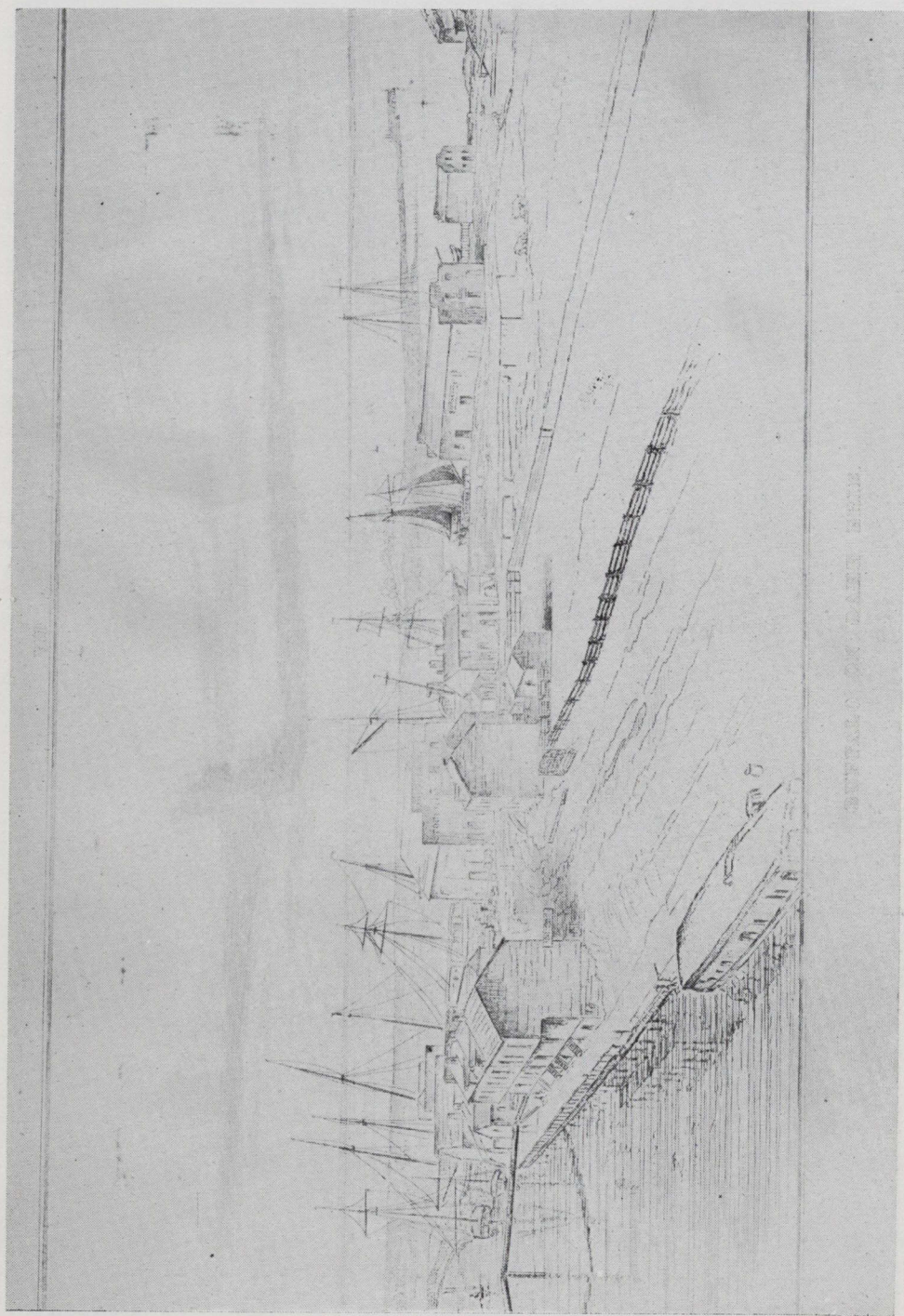
Sheldon Ball's view of Wilkeson's handiwork, done for Ball's pamphlet "Buffalo in 1825", and thought to be the first print made in this city. The raw cut of the canal is represented in the foreground.

VIEW OF BUFFALO HARBOR,

Look of Hull & Moore's.

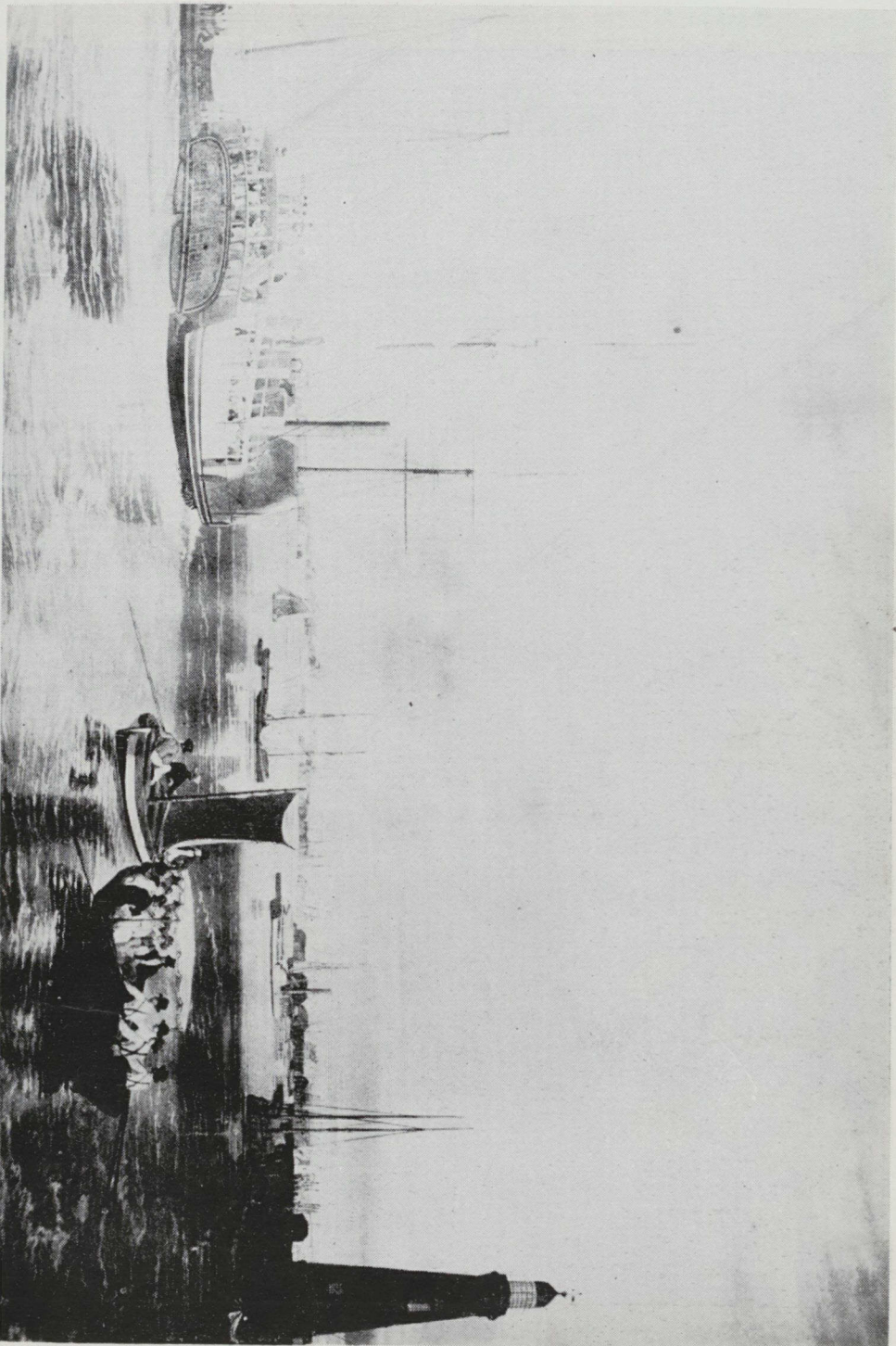
1825.

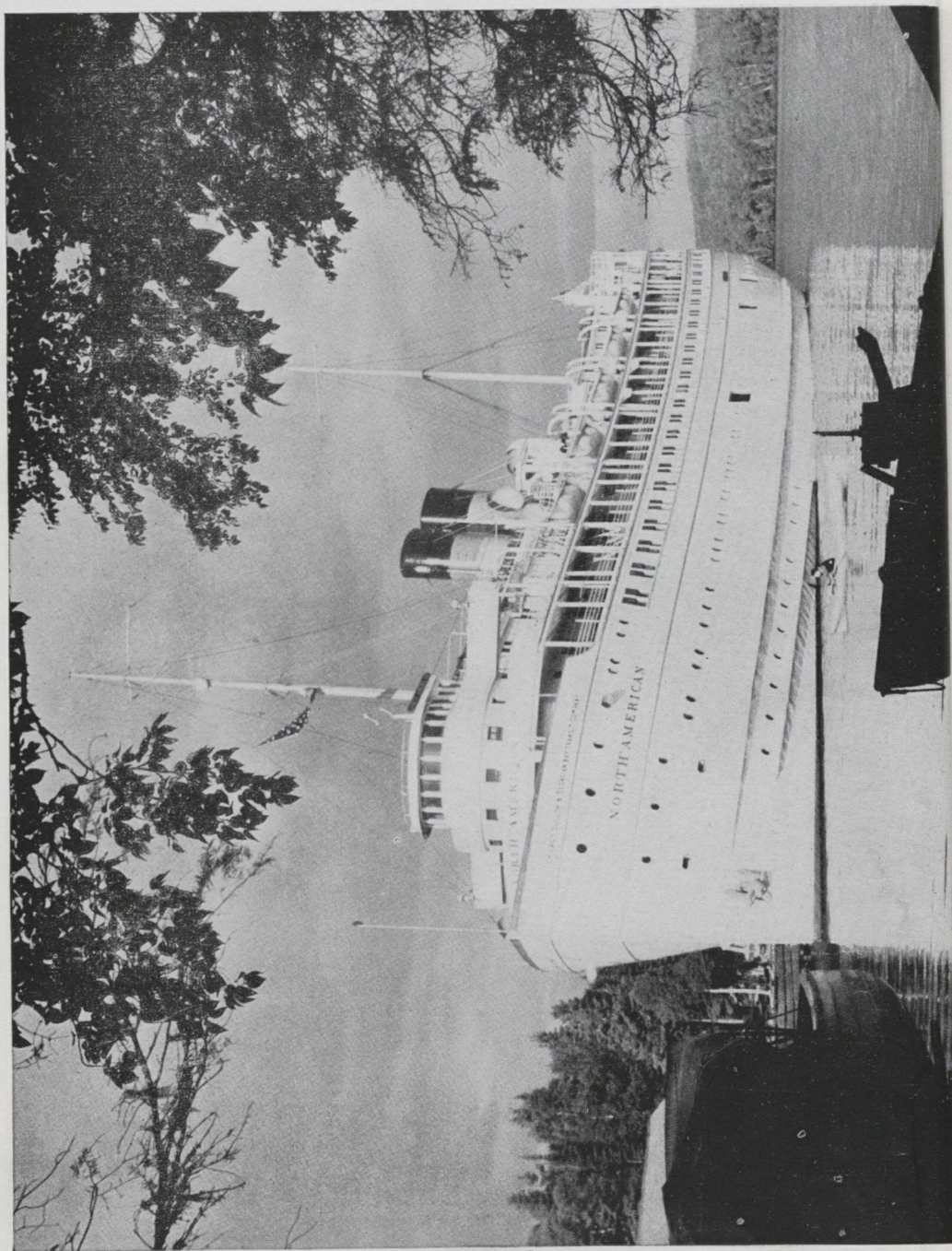




Basil Hall's camera lucida sketch of 1827 of the junction of canal, creek, and lake, with the evidences of rapidly growing commerce. Buffalo he described as " . . . a flourishing American town at the eastern end of Lake Erie, where the great New York canal

The harbor from the lake, about 1833. Reproduced from the print engraved by W. J. Bennett from a sketch by J. W. Hill and published by Henry J. Megarey, New York.





Courtesy The Chicago, Duluth and Georgian Bay Transit Line

volved in politics and, with Ellicott's permission, accepted the position of county treasurer from the Chautauqua County Board of Supervisors; he retained this post for ten years, until 1821, when he resigned. Peacock also served as a county judge. In all his dealings with the Resident-Agent, Peacock worked hard for the Company and remained loyal to Joseph Ellicott¹⁰.

David Goodwin also had married a daughter of one of Ellicott's sisters and had joined the Holland Land Company as a clerk in the Batavia office. In 1817, the Resident-Agent showed his confidence in Goodwin by appointing him sub-agent for the county of Cattaraugus. In addition to Goodwin, Ellicott's brother Benjamin proved a valuable aide to him, serving as assistant to the Resident-Agent so long as Joseph held that post. Upon Joseph's urging, Benjamin entered politics in 1805 and accepted the Council of Appointment's offer of a judgeship of Genesee County. He also served two terms in Congress from 1817 to 1821. While Benjamin kept himself in the background of Joseph's busy life, he executed thoroughly the tasks that his brother assigned to him, and remained a dependable lieutenant.¹¹

This inner family circle of Joseph and Benjamin Ellicott, David E. Evans, William Peacock, David Goodwin, and James W. Stevens soon became known as the Big Family. It was a tightly knit family group that held considerable economic and political power in western New York and, by working closely together, it succeeded in increasing and consolidating its strength. At the head of the Big Family towered the dominating figure of Joseph Ellicott, part-father, part-instructor, part-counselor—but always in command.

With the incorporation of family relations into a smoothly operating organization, Joseph Ellicott had added a major accomplishment that merged well with his other successes in the field of politics and politicians. It effectively supplemented the role that he had taken in the state election of 1804; it implemented his valuable work in establishing friendly ties with other politicians; and it strengthened considerably his position of power in western New York.

At all times, however, Joseph Ellicott clearly maintained that he had entered politics only as a means of increasing land sales, and not because of the attractiveness of political power. As Resident-Agent of the Holland Land Company, he never lost sight of the fact that it was his primary job to sell property, not to gain political laurels for the sake of personal prestige. He rubbed shoulders with political figures not because he envied them, but because he wished to demonstrate the strength and quality of his own. He would need all of the political respect that he could obtain if he were to overcome the three major problems still facing the Holland Land Company—the creation of new county seats, the lack of roads, and the high taxes that threatened to extinguish Company profits.



10. Turner, p. 277; Ellicott to Peacock, November 28, 1811.

11. Turner, pp. 432, 663; Ellicott to Goodwin, April 17, 1817; to Busti, June 22, 1804.

Eugene Speicher

by A. Conger Goodyear

EUGENE SPEICHER was born in Buffalo in 1883. He studied art in the Albright Art School there, went on to the Art Students' League and the Henri Art School in New York and continued his studies in the galleries of various European countries.

But Gene was not only a budding artist, he was an athlete. He was a member of the champion German-American basketball team, the Harlem Globe Trotters of that day. Something else he got out of basketball: the beginning of his life-long friendship with George Bellows, also a player of parts.

In 1910 he married Elsie Wilson, taking her out of Vassar for the purpose. That continues to stand as one of his greatest accomplishments. They live in winter in a charming apartment in a dingy-fronted building in 60th Street in New York. Elsie does the cooking and she is *cordon bleu*. In summer she continues to practice her art in Woodstock, New York.

George Bellows died in 1924. In the same year I wrote to Gene suggesting he paint a portrait of Katharine Cornell for the Albright Art Gallery. His reply follows:

"Since poor George's death I've been in a haze that I am just coming out of. I thank you for your letter about him. He certainly was a great friend, a great artist and a marvelous enthusiast about life and I am conscious of a vast emptiness since he died that no doubt will get larger and larger as time goes on.

"After getting your letter about painting Miss Cornell we went to the performance & the combination of Cornell and Shaw made a rare evening. She came to tea the following day and we like her personally very much. We talked about the possible canvas & she seemed more than willing to do what

she could to make the effort a success. I thought she was beautiful in that red dress you speak of & could get up all kinds of steam for a full length."

The Cornell portrait proved to be Speicher's masterpiece, but there were many difficulties to be overcome before it was finished. I told Gene how I would like to have it done; Kit standing in the red dress she wore in *Candida*, very simply, like Manet's "Woman with a Parrot" in the Metropolitan Museum.

"I called up the Cornell house & found everything going along merrily for the GREEN HAT & not for the portrait so that fall it will be."

"I have been working on the portrait steadily & have it about completed with the exception of the head & hand. I had about eight sittings or rather standings from Miss Cornell & then when she went into rehearsals for the GREEN HAT I worked on the dress, background, etc. from a model who had exactly her figure. The head and hand are the first painting and of course I called it a good preparation for the real painting. I worked as I always do for perfecting any part.

"Then the news came that she had to rehearse every day for this new play & the future seemed uncertain. Today I called her on the phone & the really sad news came. She is still playing in *Candida* but has 3 matinees instead of two & a rehearsal every morning & then in two weeks she opens in Detroit after which a run in Chicago is planned so it looks as though we would have to let it go until the fall. I am pretty sad about it so is she.

"I have a canvas 4x7 feet. She is standing simply in the red dress and we are both keen about the results so far. She is a wonderful person & when she

does have time I am sure I can pull off something fine."

"My summer has been interrupted a good deal with the Bellows Memorial Show and I have not done as much work as I had hoped to do, but I was very glad to do what I could to bring about the present impressive exhibition of his work.

"Between ourselves Buffalo owns his very finest achievement in the Eleanor Jean & Anna."

"I shipped the Cornell portrait today. I hope you will like the canvas & all I can say is, that it's my best effort".

"I am up my neck in the 'Lincoln' & to say that I like it is to put it mildly. Its a really great book & I think will live & find a permanent place in great literature of all time. It has great poetry & most of all it continually shoots at the overtones of reality which so few books ever do. I am sure I will be one of the many who will write Sandburg."

"I am very much pleased you think I did well with Kit's portrait & hope it won't be too long before the other two on the committee 'see the light'.

"About the exhibition of Americans. I am all for it. The committee is a good one but I think Weber is very very hard to work with. He's a very good artist but the most unreasonable & excitable man to work with on a jury. However, as far as I am concerned I would be very willing to fight in case it's necessary as art is one thing I think worth fighting for. Walt Kuhn is a man who could easily take his place & would probably bring in to the selection the same kind of men. Spencer is a good painter & I am sure would be good in this capacity. Also Sterne."

The Cornell portrait was bought and put on exhibition by the Albright Gallery, but it did not meet with public acclaim. In fact there was more complaint than praise. Among the mourners were some members of Kit's family. After a while

I paid the Gallery the purchase price and gave the picture to Kit. For some time it hung in the lobby of the Empire Theatre. Then I suggested to Kit that she give it to the Museum of Modern Art, which she did. Years later the Albright decided it would like to have it after all. I arranged this on payment of 20% more than the original cost. So now it is where it belongs.

When I was appointed chairman of the committee to organize the exhibition known as "American Art Today" for the New York World's Fair in 1939 I asked Speicher to serve as a member of the Artists Committee, charged with the final selection of works for the show. It was a group of nine that included artists of widely differing view points, but somehow it worked. Gene was an ideal balance wheel in such an operation. He is intolerant only of what he has called stuttering or double talk in a work of art. He can admire Picasso as well as Rembrandt.

There was a time in the late '30s when Gene stopped painting portraits altogether, but a few years later he began again. Stephen Clark and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller asked me to sit for a portrait that they wanted to give to the Museum of Modern Art. They gave me the choice of artist and I picked Speicher. He offered to include my favorite Sealyham in the picture, but I decided I wanted top billing, so only the leash appears on the table. I hope that some day the canvas may be resurrected in a more suitable setting. In his letter to me on the subject Gene wrote that he was engaged to do two or three other portraits and went on to say:

"This sounds, I know, like a program of Howard Chandler Christy, but it all happened within the last two weeks, after I let it be known that I would consider doing 2 or 3 (not 4 or 5) portraits a year, and that, only in view of

[Nineteen]

the times and the unknown future. Could you wait until Fall?"

In 1945 a little brochure on Speicher was published. In it is printed his Credo. It contains one phrase that expresses his aim in art. He feels that, above all, his work must be "warm, simple and well ordered." I think that there lies the essence of his work. These are the quali-

ties we find in his portraits, his landscapes, figures, bouquets of flowers and drawings alike. These too are the qualities we find in Speicher the man. There is no slightest pretense about him. Of a true integrity himself, he respects the integrity of other artists whose aims may be entirely opposite to his. He loves all the good things of life and views the world around him with serenity.

The Georgian Bay Line

by Donald E. Poste

THE CHICAGO, Duluth and Georgian Bay Transit Company received its charter under the General Laws of Indiana August 1, 1912, and began active operation on the Great Lakes in the spring of 1913. The firm originated with Robert C. Davis, who in long years of experience with various lakes steamship companies had developed some unique ideas regarding steamship operation. He believed that there was great opportunity for a company specializing in long-distance deluxe cruises, as contrasted with the then-current vogue for excursions. Furthermore, he believed that the ships engaged in such an operation should be specially designed to carry passengers only and should not carry freight.

Determined to organize his own company and to put his ideas into effect, Davis resigned his position as general passenger agent of the Goodrich Transit Company in Chicago early in 1912, immediately setting out on an intense promotional campaign in the United States and Canada. His salesmanship was impressive. The capital was raised and in association with Charles Bour, William Black, and F. S. Smith the firm was incorporated with Davis as first president. In the spring of 1913 its first ship, the *North American*, slid down the ways of

the Great Lakes Engineering Works at Ecorse, Michigan.

The ship was hailed immediately as a "model of modern shipbuilding," incorporating in her design radical departures from the accepted pattern for Great Lakes passenger vessels. Although she burned coal and had one stack amidships, stern propulsion permitted sleek lines, which contrasted with the bulky sidewheelers of the day. Interior design was simple, devoid of the rococo which so soon "dated" many other contemporary passenger ships.

The maiden voyage of the *North American* commenced on June 20, 1913, a cruise chartered by the Wisconsin Bankers Association. Even before completion of the ship, on January 20, 1913, the first company tariff had been filed providing for a public cruise operation from Chicago to Mackinac Island; Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan; Port Arthur, Ontario; Duluth, Minnesota; Houghton, and Detour, Michigan; Collingwood, Ontario, and back to Chicago. On this itinerary the *North American* commenced operation June 28, 1913, following it throughout the summer season. Popularity was immediate. Another ship was needed and plans were drawn up for its building.

Launched in the spring of 1914, the *South American* replaced the *North* on

the run from Chicago to Duluth. The *North American* inaugurated the route to Detroit and Buffalo. The ship docked in Buffalo at Michigan and Ganson Streets (Hatch Slip) and offices were established at 289 Main Street, with R. J. Van Dyke as agent.

The death of Mr. Davis in 1916 brought the company to the verge of financial disaster, but the astute management of the Messrs. Bour, Black and Smith weathered this storm as well as the financial problems arising from the first World War. In 1922 the two ships were converted to oil fuel. Each had a second stack added and the funnels were cut down and raked slightly.

The itineraries of the cruises varied little from year to year after initial experimentation had revealed the most remunerative.

In 1939 the steamer *Alabama* was acquired from the Messrs. Mendelssohn and Kirby of Detroit. This ship launched in 1910, had been the flagship of the Goodrich Transit Company fleet, carrying both passengers and freight. It was re-painted and considerably remodeled for the Georgian Bay Line, but remained quite limited in passenger-carrying capacity. After coming to the Georgian Bay Line she operated from Buffalo to Duluth in 1939 and 1940, and in 1941 and 1942 was used for five-day and weekend cruises from Chicago, the *South American* assuming the Duluth run. The overhead became too great in the face of wartime conditions and at the end of the 1942 season the *Alabama* was retired. Title to the ship was not assumed by the Georgian Bay Line until 1943.

In 1945 a group of Cleveland businessmen arranged for her purchase. She was converted by the Toledo Shipbuilding Company into an excursion-type vessel. In the process murals and expensive inlaid woodwork, conceived in the "grand manner" of lakes shipbuilding, were ripped out to make room for standees. In Sep-

tember, 1946, after two seasons of operation to Put-in-Bay, the ship was returned to the Georgian Bay Line, and has since rested at the company dock in Holland, Michigan, a good sturdy ship awaiting sale, scrapping or the ravages of time.

Since 1941 the itinerary adopted for the *South American* to Duluth from Buffalo has increased in popularity and has become the mainstay of the company, although the *North American's* Chicago itinerary remains popular on a somewhat smaller scale.

Management has changed occasionally since the founding of the company. Bour, Black and Smith retained control until 1933, when the company went to William Mayo, Dwight Douglas, and William Lucking. In 1947 Mr. Lucking obtained control of the company and in 1958 was President and Treasurer. The general offices of the company were transferred from Chicago to Detroit in 1935, although executive offices are still maintained in Chicago.

At least one ship of the Georgian Bay Line has served Buffalo since the *North American* inaugurated the service in 1914, with the exception of a short lapse during the first World War. The first docking at the foot of Main Street (Lackawanna Terminal) was on July 2, 1916 by the *South American*, and this dock has been used continuously by Georgian Bay Line ships from that time to the present.

Since establishment of a company office in Buffalo, the Georgian Bay Line has been represented by the following agents:

1914-1920	R. J. Van Dyke
1921-1935	Willard E. Brown
1936-37	E. A. Sommers
1938	Earl Haberer
1939	R. M. LaRue
1940-48	Lyle L. Schoonover
1948-present	Donald E. Poste

The seasonal office employees who assisted them were many, mostly college students who worked during the summer.

[*Twenty-one*]

Among the best remembered was T. Lucile Stoltz, Ticket Agent under Mr. Schoonover. Since 1953 Raymon L. Chrisler has served as City Passenger Agent. The Buffalo office has been located in the Lackawanna Terminal since 1936.

With a sailing season of four months at most, continued operation of these ships has required constant vigilance on the part of management. While many things may influence the economy of the company, such as business recessions, public interest in "fad" vacations, reports of disasters, up until this year 1958 the prime factor in determining whether a season would be profitable or unprofitable has been the weather. A hot season means good business, a cold season means more work to be done to promote sales.

The ships in operational time are only slightly over 14 years old, although their chronological age would be 45 and 44 for the *North* and *South* respectively. They have been excellently maintained, con-

tinually modernized, and provided with the latest in navigation and safety devices. Personnel includes many who have been with the company for years. E. J. Goebel, now Executive Vice-President and Passenger Traffic Manager, began in 1925 as one of the pursers, N. L. Chinnock, now General Passenger Agent, began somewhat later as an office clerk. The lakes and their ships inspire a devotion equal to that known by the salt-water sailor for his ships and the sea.

Each sailing day, people gather in large numbers at the dock to bid farewell to their friends, or to welcome them back. For a brief moment is re-lived a scene which has been enacted countless times since the inception of passenger travel on the Lakes. In a day that has seen the demise of many a larger company, the continuance of the Georgian Bay Line is a tribute not only to its present management, but also to the ideas of Robert C. Davis, founder, who designed and planned in advance of his time.

This I Remember – XVII: The Doctor's Visit

by Charles S. Illingworth

MOTHER was sick. I had been cautioned to be quiet and keep out from "under foot". The doctor had been summoned and was expected to call that morning. Mother's room was given an extra going over with a duster. Articles on the big marble top dresser were rearranged, the pillow cases and counterpanes against the high black-walnut head board bed were smoothed, and mother lay in her high-necked night gown, embroidered at wrists and neck. A cane chair was placed at the bedside for the doctor, and a fresh doily was put on the table that stood at the head of the bed. When all this had been completed, the maid returned to the kitchen. Mama Scobell, my grandmother, who lived with us, sat

down in a rocking chair and an air of expectancy hung over the entire house.

I waited in the front parlor in a chair from which I could watch through the front window. After what seemed to me a long time the doctor's carriage drove up and stopped. It was something like a stanhope with a large leather folding top, with small square windows in each side and bows on the outside. This I recall vividly. The doctor alighted and tied his horse to the hitching post. Removing his black case from the seat, he came up the walk and rang the doorbell. The maid answered the bell and relieved him of his overcoat and square crowned derby, which she hung on the hat-rack. This was a wondrous piece of furniture made of oak,

[*Twenty-two*]

about seven feet in height, and four feet wide. It had a chest with a cover in which were stored rubbers or overshoes. At each end, at floor level, was a circular brass pan or basin. About three feet above the floor arms projected in a semi-circle, designed to hold umbrellas whose ferrules stood in the brass pans. The back of this piece was a mirror, surrounded by a three-inch frame to which were attached long hooks for hanging overcoats and hats. When the doctor had doffed his hat and coat, Mama Scobell, standing at the head of the stairs, called "Up here, Doctor," and he started up the stairs, while I watched from the doorway unnoticed.

The doctor had a full, dark beard and wore eyeglasses. He had a frock coat with satin lapels, known as a Prince Albert, striped trousers, a dark vest across which was stretched a heavy gold watch chain. He wore a standing collar, an ascot tie, and round white cuffs with large gold cuff buttons. It seemed that all doctors dressed alike, but all trimmed their beards differently. Some wore Van Dykes, others the spade shape, and I remember one with Burnsides. Entering mother's room, he sat on the chair at her bed-side. Inserting a thermometer in her mouth, he took her wrists in one hand and pulled out a hunting case watch from his pocket and gazed at its face, while everyone in the room kept silent. Finally, he closed the case with a snap, and removing the thermometer from mother's mouth, he handed it to Mama Scobell, requesting her to wash it under the faucet. He then asked mother where she felt pain, if she had soreness in her throat, difficulty in breathing, and other questions. I sat on the floor at the head of the stairs where I could hear the conversation, and could see what he did by looking in the mirror of the dresser in the bedroom.

Then raising mother to a sitting position, he placed his ear against her chest and listened; he then listened with his ear against her back. Placing his hand on the

places where he had listened with his ear, he struck his fingers with the tips of the fingers of the other hand, producing a hollow sound. "Ah! That is not bad at all," he observed. "Now, if I may have two glasses, about two-thirds full of water and a clean spoon, if you please". While these were being brought, he opened his black bag. This bag opened in the center of the top and disclosed four rows of small bottles, labeled, and containing various colored liquids. Selecting one of the vials he poured a few drops into one of the glasses, and from another vial, he poured a few drops into the second glass. "Now we'll have a look at that throat." Taking the spoon which lay alongside the medicine glass, he depressed mother's tongue with the handle. "That's fine," he said. "Gargle morning and evening with a little salt in warm water, and the soreness will disappear in a day or so. Now I want you to take two spoonfuls of this medicine every hour, alternating, and I will be in to see you again tomorrow". Then closing his bag he talked briefly about the weather, inquired about father and Mama Scobell, and left the room. Coming upon me, he gave me a pat on the head and hurried downstairs.

Mama Scobell followed him down and in the lower hall she asked, in hushed tones, "Is it anything serious?" "No", answered the doctor, "a touch of bronchitis which we can arrest. By keeping her in bed and warm, she will recover in two or three days. Good day." Donning his overcoat and hat, he went down the steps, climbed into his buggy, and drove to his next patient.

In the sick-room everybody felt better. Butter chips were brought up and placed over the glasses with the spoon placed across the one which was to be taken next. The shutters were adjusted to give the right amount of light, the pillows plumped up, and mother was advised to "try to go to sleep," and I was herded downstairs where I went to the kitchen.

History Along the Frontier

THE welcome announcement of the opening of the West Seneca Historical Society's building on Mill Street has been released, and the event will likely be history when this reaches our members. It is scheduled for Sunday, June 15, and will mark officially and with joy the reaching of a long-sought goal. The building has for some time been used by a number of West Seneca organizations as a meeting place and will be developed as a social center as well as a historical restoration.

THE Clarence Historical Society is deep in preparations for the sesquicentennial observance of the establishment of the Town of Clarence. This will be held during the last week of July and will be announced in detail in the newspapers for the benefit of the many who will want to join the fun. There will be popular observances of the usual — and most attractive — kind.

THE Congress of Historical Societies, sponsored jointly by this Society and the University of Buffalo, is scheduled for Wednesday, July 23, in the University's Norton Hall, with the Society entertaining briefly at an afternoon tea in its building. Among the subjects to be taken up in the various sessions will be museum cataloging (by Mr. Hopkins) and the work of the archivist (by Mr. Lester Smith.) The Director, with Lloyd Graham and Frank Copley, will participate in a session on business history. The work of local societies will be reviewed by a panel that has already distinguished itself by a brilliant and comprehensive summary at the recent meeting of the Erie County Historical Federation with the Elma Historical Society. This group (and how fortunate, it was felt by all who heard them, we are to have performers of this quality) includes Mrs. Julia Boyer-Reinstein, Mr. Tom Kenney,

Dr. Virginia Cummings, and Mr. George Sipprell.

There will be other worthwhile program items, but as the announcements will be scattered broadcast before this appears, there will be no need to repeat all. Any who wish to receive announcements (which include a warm and comprehensive invitation to attend) may receive one by calling our office.

THE annual convention of Junior Historians of Erie County, held in our building May 24, featured Mr. Elbert Hubbard II. He was first identified by a TV-type panel of inquisitors and by the audience, after which he spoke movingly about his father and the Roycroft enterprises. Many class and individual projects in local history were displayed by these active juniors and were granted awards on the judgment of a committee, Dr. Eric Brunger and Dr. Virginia Cummings. Mr. Odell Scott of the East Aurora Schools arranged the presentation of Mr. Hubbard.

ACQUISITIONS. All of our donors deserve mention, and most of our acquisitions — although one occasionally wonders at the flow of materials into our collections. But who would refuse a pianola (given by Mrs. John Allen), an electric coffee grinder of 1902 (Mr. Adolf M. Jasper), a century-old tea set (Mrs. LaFayette Andrews), a Hammond typewriter, (Mr. Harry Rettke), or a pair of grandfather's fire helmets (Mrs. Frederick A. Terry)? Also tempting our curators were 19th-century valentines from Mr. George H. Stout, a pair of button shoes and a castiron figure of a buffalo from Mrs. David Howard, an early Edison disc phonograph from Mrs. Mason Pettibone, and some World War II ration books from our engineer, Mr. Raymond Schenk.

(Continued on Page 28)

Books You May Want to See

SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS. *General Brock and Niagara Falls*. Pp. 192. Illustrated. Random House, New York, 1958. Price \$2.50.

Both the title and the jacket of this book are conspicuously commercial. However, this is not the fault of its author. For one thing, history does not especially associate General Brock with Niagara Falls. He saw it, yes, but he made history at Detroit and at Queenston Heights.

More ridiculous still, the jacket of the book has the Falls in the immediate background while General Brock is shown leading his troops up the heights at Queenston. However, this distortion of historical fact can not be charged against the author of the book. It is strictly in the nature of a sales gimmick. Mr. Adams has a very clean record as a meticulous and able craftsman and historian and does much inside the book to redeem it from the damage done to it on the outside by its overzealous publisher.

Although the book is a member of Random House's Landmark Series and intended for the teen-age reader, the adult reader wishing to know more about General Brock will find it much worth reading.

As usual, Mr. Adams has done a workmanlike job. It is very clear that his research penetrated the depth and width of the General's life from his romantic boyhood on the Isle of Guernsey to his death near the heights of Queenston.

Mr. Adams appears to have been genuinely impressed by the life of General Brock. Yet one cannot accuse him of the excessive and even maudlin admiration previously displayed by Canadian authors who have sketched the General's life. General Brock emerges as a good man but not a super-man. The author's supporting facts have clearly been dug out of authentic sources.

Mr. Adams has been ruggedly honest. Like many honest men who have impartially studied the War of 1812, he is not especially proud either of the American motives or of the success of American arms. "An honest historian," he says in his preface, "must forget patriotic prejudices and stick to the facts". This is a reminder that many historians are victims of national egotism.

Unlike the War Hawks in the Congress of the United States, during the year 1812, Mr. Adams believes that this was a war that should never have been fought. More than that, it was a war of aggression and the Americans clearly lost it, for the aim was to annex Canada. Of course, England did much on the high seas to supply the War Hawks with support for their idea of war. Mr. Adams makes this clear. He also makes clear the fact that the British aggravated the United States by favoring the mid-Western Indians and supplying them with arms.

Barring General Jacob Brown, General Andrew Jackson, Commodore Oliver H. Perry, Colonel Winfield Scott, Colonel Solomon Van Rensselaer and General Peter B. Porter but few heroes were to be numbered among the American forces. Unfortunately Mr. Adams makes no mention either of Colonel Scott or of General Porter. However, these omissions do not vitally damage the book although people of our frontier will miss the names of these outstanding men.

This reviewer has a special interest both in General Brock and in the Battle of Queenston Heights because his great-grandfather, young Sergeant-Major Thomas Yates, fought in the 49th Regiment under General Brock. The General was the great-uncle of young Thomas Yates. After having studied this battle for many years, the reviewer must confess that Mr. Adams has done a good job in describing the action at Queenston.

[Twenty-five]

Curiously enough this Brock biography came into being as a result of a book written by this reviewer. When Bennet Cerf, the head of Random House, visited Niagara Falls a few years ago, the writer autographed a copy of his *Niagara Story* for him. It was from this book that Cerf got his idea to publish a biography of General Brock. He commissioned Samuel Hopkins Adams to do the job.

Lockport

RAYMOND F. YATES

HORACE SAMUEL MERRILL. *Bourbon Leader: Grover Cleveland and the Democratic Party*. Pp. viii, 224. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1957. \$3.50.

A year before he became Mayor of Buffalo Cleveland refused to become counsel for the New York Central Railroad at \$15,000 per year. He had saved money, and he liked Buffalo. Now what were the attractions of Buffalo which Cleveland considered so significant? Fishing trips, hunting excursions, clambakes, card-playing were some. His associations at the City Club of Buffalo as well as the Beaver Island Club, both of which Cleveland had helped to establish, were others. Professor Merrill finds Cleveland leading the narrow, limited life he declares to be typical of the provincialism of Buffalo at the time. "Buffalo and Grover were so busy going upward for material or professional success and downward for recreation that there was no time to venture outward for understanding or inward for spiritual and philosophical contemplation. Buffalo was a gateway to the West but its citizens rarely peered beyond the portals."

While it would be parochial to deny Buffalo's acceptance of the prevailing concepts of the Gilded Age wherein the millionaires were the heroes and money-getting was the driving motivation of living, yet, it seems to me, Professor Merrill's rather glib statements do not have to be

taken as totally descriptive of the city. He, himself, stated elsewhere that Cleveland found less and less pleasurable his visits to the Lewis F. Allen family "due to the dignified intellectual, and cultural interests" of the Allens. One of these interests, by the way, was the Buffalo Historical Society, of which Mr. Allen was one of the founders. And Allan Nevins has remarked that Cleveland's Buffalo was not concentrating its energies solely on the market place but was giving evidence of a desire for more cultural pursuits such as music and the theatre.

In examining Cleveland's national political career, Professor Merrill acknowledges that it was his stern integrity that resuscitated the office of the Presidency, which had fallen into a low estate since Lincoln's death. But it seems that Professor Merrill is disappointed with Cleveland because of his insistence upon being simply a reformer rather than a radical. Yet to ask Cleveland to be a Populist, for example, is demanding from him a performance quite impossible to him. Cleveland had no argument with the "Bourbon" world provided that the rules of the game be honestly regarded.

It is true that in the main Cleveland's political role was a negative one. His reputation as a "veto Mayor" paved the way for his moving to Albany where his record as a "veto Governor" greatly aided his transfer to Washington. Cleveland's greatness is to be found in his ability to say "no" with unflinching conviction irrespective of the pressure applied and the prospects of political harm to himself. Mayor Cleveland vetoed a crooked five-year street-cleaning contract as forthrightly as Governor Cleveland negated the patronage plans of Tammany Hall. And it was the same Cleveland who applied the presidential veto to the "pension grabs" supported by the Grand Army of the Republic. As a matter of record, Cleveland set a new high for vetoes, running over five hundred, which would stand

until the Presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Had Cleveland been politically wiser and more amenable to compromise, perhaps he would have been successful with his tariff crusade. Had Cleveland been more aware of the economic conditions of the West and less singleminded about the "Bourbon" economic philosophy, he might have held his party together to achieve a reform program. But had he been these things, he hardly would have been the blunt, stubborn proponent of plain honesty in politics and in short, I dare say, he would not have been elected President of the United States.

But these are just some of the challenging points made by Professor Merrill in slightly over two hundred pages written in engaging style concerning the first Democratic President since the Civil War. *Niagara University* DANIEL W. MC GUIRE

WILLIAM ARMSTRONG FAIRBURN. *Merchant Sail*. Center Lowell, Maine, Fairburn Marine Educational Foundation, Inc.. Six volumes, 1945-1955.

One may as well try to review *The Encyclopaedia Britannica: Merchant Sail* is an encyclopaedia that has been distributed to libraries as a public service.

It covers a period from the very early colonial days until long after the Civil War. The subject matter treated includes just about everything relating to sea-borne commerce and trading and related subjects such as maritime and vessel legislation, orders-in-council, diplomacy and politics, naval campaigns and naval actions, vessels' histories, owners and dimensions, histories of shipping firms and their fleets.

It is without a doubt a most valuable reference source to any historian doing research work in the maritime field quite regardless of his special field of interest. The amount of detailed information is astounding, especially such as pertains to

the maritime-naval history of Maine and the New England coast.

So many different angles of marine history are treated that it is out of the question to select any particular ones for a more extended review. However, I will state that from the point of view of a researcher of the histories of steamers built prior to the Civil War, *Merchant Sail* contains much information about down-east shipping firms and their steamers which the writer has not seen in any other book in the same extent and detail.

Buffalo

ERIK HEYL

THE DIARY of Lieutenant D. B. Douglass recounting the campaign of 1814 on the Niagara frontier is at last available in print, although it has been used by scholars who have studied the history of the War of 1812. It is in paper covers, 32 pages in length and may be ordered for \$1.25 of the editor, Dr. S. W. Jackman, 272 Sabattus Street, Lewiston, Maine. ★ Harry S. Douglass, County Historian of Wyoming, is the source of a new history of Arcade. It may be ordered from him for \$3.30 at 204 Wilson Building, Arcade. The excellence of his work will make this a "must" for all who are interested in Arcade. The book was prepared as a part of the observance of the village's sesquicentennial. ★ The Detroit Historical Society has published an interesting lecture, "Canadian - American Relations Along the Detroit River" by New York State Historian Albert B. Corey. It has, naturally, many points of reference to the history of our own frontier. ★ We have received the gift of a handsome history of the Anaconda Copper Company written by Isaac F. Marcossou. It recounts many anecdotes of the founders and recites some of the technology and physical development of the company but on the whole it unfortunately does not get at the fundamentals of the story of a great business. The Buffalo Anaconda plant is mentioned.

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(Continued from Page 24)

★ Various domestic items, clothing, curling iron, bottles and the like have come from Mrs. Chauncey Tucker, Miss M. Walker, Mrs. John B. Lovatt, and our librarian, Miss Alice Pickup. ★ A new experience in an old institution will interest everyone: the Highland Park Literary Club recently decided upon disbandment after decades of activity, and voted to deposit its records in our manuscripts collection. To this welcome gift the members have added the balance of their treasury, which we acknowledge with special thanks.

MANUSCRIPT accessions. Mr. Lester Smith gives us a valued list covering the past few months including a long run, useful for social history, of personal and family papers of James D. Sawyer and his son, George Pliny Sawyer 1840-1885, presented to us by Mrs. Ansley Sawyer. Mrs. E. B. McKenna has given us a similar collection, chiefly written by Arthur Burtis and Grace Phillips, relating to Cherry Valley. ★ Two interesting documents: a colonial writ dated November 28, 1727, relating to one Francis Curtis of the Colony of Plymouth in New England from Mrs. Fred D. Corey (through the good offices of Mr. Shirley Taylor), and a bond dated Batavia, April 18, 1804, of Ebenezer Cary to Wilhelm Willink and others of the Holland Land Company, from Mr. Charles Cary of our Board of Managers. Mr. Cary added to this item broadsides and circulars of the Anti-Masonic Party, about 1830. ★ We are glad to acknowledge the personal papers of Dr. William F. Jacobs 1920-1945, presented by himself. It is news these days when a man looks after his own papers. But we are just as glad to get the personal letters received by Colonel Harry G. Johnson of the Army Medical Corps during his service in the Far East in World War II, from Mr. Lawrence H. Grady. ★ The minutes of proceedings of

[Twenty-eight]

the Women's Missionary Conference of the Buffalo Baptist Association 1945-195 continues a series already in our custody.

Comment and Suggestion

Member Alexander Galt, formerly head of the Buffalo Public Library, notes in respect to Thomas H. McKaig's remarks on the Iroquois Hotel and its relation to the Library that the Library was begun 1884 and the hotel site was cleared by fire March 18, 1887, just after the Library had removed its books from one of the destroyed buildings. The Iroquois was built by the Library Association, as was the addition provided for the Pan-American Exposition. Further details may be found in Arthur Goldberg, *The Buffalo Public Library*, pp. 100-106.

The Issue's Authors

DONALD E. POSTE is plainly identified in his article on the Georgian Bay Line, but there are things about him not there hinted at. Although his working life has been absorbed in employment by transportation enterprises, usually in Buffalo offices, he has since his youth been equally devoted to genealogical research. At the age of 17 he helped to organize the Genealogical and History Society of Perry and later for a number of years edited the now defunct magazine of the Niagara Frontier Genealogical Society. He now collects family records in a number of areas. Mr. Poste has served with the Georgian Bay Line since 1943, as manager of the Buffalo office since 1948.

Since he last appeared in our columns MARVIN A. RAPP has moved from Buffalo to enter the service of the State University of New York as Associate Executive Dean. He declares that he is unfortunately not paid proportionately to the length of his title, but we consider it fortunate that he is putting his vast knowledge of Buffalo harbor in publishable shape. We expect to follow this article with several more.

To Build A City: Buffalo 1832 - 1957

Charles A. Brady

*In time and out of time we have builded a City
Of steel and stone and wood and men's strong hands;
And of that, not built with hands, which is God's part.
It is a goodly thing, this City of ours,
And shall be goodlier as time draws on.*

The
Name

Did buffalo really come to drink here once?
Dawn-bulls, Dordogne-dark, burned as by burins
Against far skies of cloud and air and water?
Chabert Joncaire, old soldier, Seneca sachem,
Saw them from his canoe on great Niagara.
Buffalo are to be found, he wrote, *on the south,*
But not on the north, not on the hither shore.
Or was it rather that the French called this
Great running river of ours *le beau fleuve*?
It's all too long ago to tell for sure now.
What's clear is this:
The buffalo, if they came, no longer come—
Except cloud bison grazing above their river.
But our Niagara is still *beau fleuve*.
Like an Iroquois arrow its flight firm-fledged in beauty,
Sundering in peace two mighty brother nations.

What is it like, our city?
Let's take a little walk in time and space—
Perhaps a little out of them as well.
Like Henry Thoreau, who loved another town,
A man might say, and not be too far wrong:
I have travelled much in Buffalo.

As in a buckskin pouch that's full of gold
The autumn leaves are rich with Indian dust.
It isn't the streets alone, though they've Indian names:
Seneca, Mohawk, Huron, Chippewa, Genesee.
There's something more than this, though this is enough.

[Twenty-nine]

Watch out, if you scuff a shoe on an evening walk!
 Watch out, if the lake wind rises when dusk draws on!
 (And there's plenty of wind in Buffalo, you find out.)
 The dust that blows then into eyes and ears
 May open ears and eyes, not stop them up.
 May trouble your blood in sleep with Delaware drum,
 With cry of loon over lake from Algonquin throat.

The red man was here first. Next came the French.
 (Unless Leif's Norsemen forged this far from Vinland,
 Making their dragon-ship portage from lake to lake.)
 Last rode the British in their crimson coats.
 Walk north a space from these caryatides,
 Past this green centaur that isn't a centaur at all,
 To where a second white house fronts Park Lake.
 Inside are shadow boxes, glassed, recessed;
 And in the boxes dolls of wax and cloth:
 Toy men in feathers, lily uniforms.
 But they were real once.
 They were here before us.
 They're still here in a way.
 And we can see and hear them if we try.

*The
 Beginnings*

1803

Listen now to Red Jacket, great Seneca orator,
 Out of his burial mound in Forest Lawn:
Brother, our seats were large and yours were small.
Now you are grown a great folk in our land.
And we—we have no place to spread our blankets.
 It's true. That deed lies heavy and hard upon us.
 Like Ilium they burn in beauty now.
 We have their land. And for them once a year
 A bolt of red cloth in a weathered long house,
 Ritually offered, accepted in Iroquois.
 Maybe there's something other than just owning.
 The shape of this bonny land we say is ours
 Forever wears the print of a red god's sandal.
 In our town March is an old squaw gathering sticks.
 Out on the Reservation they entrap
 The season's first quick sun-starts in sweet nooses
 Of sassafras, of trailing arbutus
 To hawk them on the wind-loud downtown corners.

Later, when our Indian May comes in,
Flower-moccasined, deer-delicate of step,
Her lilac-arrowed arc through mauve-dim air
Sharp-cleaves our conqueror hearts.

Valiant the *voyageurs*. Their day was good:
Under our cataract's thunder the muttered thunder of Mass.
Hennepin hefted the host. La Salle knelt down in the snow,
Sword fraying cordovan boot. Outside the chill stockade
An eagle-lion totem towered high
Into our northern sky's slow-wheeling stars:
The *Griffon*, prowed in sign of Christ's two natures,
First of the long ships passing up our ladder of lakes
Down till today when Atlantic's world-mothering sea
Nuzzles again a child of her ocean prime.

That snow still falls upon our northern City,
Our City that seems warmest under snow.
Brute cold can strike here like a bear's white paw,
Numbing the iron fields till caribou Spring,
Rank, musky, paws aside the muffling white
To snuffle out the moss and frozen lichen.
Spring may not be so much about these parts.
But have you seen tree candelabra rise
Moon-silvered from an altar cloth of snow?
(At any season Buffalo's made of trees.
In Spring white orchards' First Communion.
In Fall red pyres for warriors' funeral.)
The street lamps bloom clear winter-daffodil?
Or heard December's pianoforte of snow,
White keys falling from night's black key sky,
Flake-felt damping the traffic's percussion,
Muting the harpsichord-thin,
Celeste-clean older music of stars?
Yes.
We orchestrate our weather differently.
It's not *plein air*, this Buffalo light. Monsieur Seurat
Couldn't catch it with his stippling pizzicato,
Nor Corot with his fluid bowing, either.
But Burchfield can. He traps these thunderheads,
These smoky mansard twilights, Lackawanna's

[*Thirty-one*]

Deep organ bass, bronze mirror of fall lake,
Long light lying subtle and soft on Sunday buildings.

1812-
1813
In the end the British seed threw out the British.
(Last time the red-coats came they lit a fire.
Across a winter world French bugles shrilled
In burning Moscow as bagpipes skirled here.)
Those English left their laws and tongue, however.
The tongue has changed a little since those days.
Alsace is in it now. Warsaw. The Rhine.
And underneath's the Ulster bite,
The lean Scots-Irish drawl,
Brought along with the songs and long rifles
When the wagons rumbled west over Cumberland.

*The
Peoples*
Other strong peoples came here over the years,
Bearing their household gods to strike new roots.
Ikons and onion towers.
Polish sausage. Italian wine.
Irish fiddles. German *glocken*.
The black man's velvety vowels
Fighting fate with a chuckle,
With banjo and sassy cake-walk.
The people of the Book came in their turn
To lay the Prophet in Grand Island reeds.
1825
The Promised Land retreated. It was not there.
Again it was not time yet. But they stayed
To eat and drink history in Buffalo *seders*.

*The
Men*
I wonder what's doing in Buffalo? O. Henry asked.
And Vachel Lindsay answered: *Within the town of Buffalo
Are prosy men with leaden eyes.*
I suppose we have our share of prosy men.
But there are other ways of looking at it.
Mark Twain's blue eyes were not exactly leaden
1870
When he strolled out beside our godlike river,
Remembering Mississippi's strong brown god
And the mer-boy, Finn, upon his hero raft.
(We have that manuscript still in our Library.)

1810 Cooper, too, looked out on Erie's reaches
Through Chingachgook's, through Leatherstocking's eyes,
Through the eyes of Harvey Birch.
(Read *Pathfinder*. Read *The Spy*. Read *The Oak*
Openings.)

1906 Fitzgerald lived here as a child. Paul Horgan,
Too. The boy Stephen Vincent Benét. And
A filigreed lady, chatelaine of the Gothic keep,
(*Roman policier américain*),
Dame Anna Katharine Green.
Not Concord. No. Still,
Scheherezade has stopped here overnight.
We had two presidents, too—and killed a third.

Sitting erect in his coach—we've kept it since,
Lamps black-leaded, cushions plumped as if new—
Looking out, over a stiffly starched high stock,
On cat-paws crinkling in Erie, Lake of the Cats,
Did Fillmore think on the grandsire in dark oils
Who shipped in the *Dolphin*, sloop, out of Cape Ann?
He killed the pirate, Phillips, with an axe
And sailed the dog's trig craft to Boston Harbor.
The Fillmore wealth was grounded on that prize—
1724 it was—in the Spring.
Now, in a Spring eleven decades later,
If Chancellor Fillmore lays aside his brief,
He may hear freshwater chanteys pirate-salt,
Lusty on the Canal at evening . . . *Buffalo Girls* . . .
The ebbing music fades downwind and up:
Algonquin chants . . . *chansons des voyageurs* . . .
Chanteys . . . Steinberg . . . Krips . . . Viennese violins . . .

1851 In his prime an Erie canaller could outswagger
Any Missouri ring-tailed roaring boy.
And a laker could outswagger a canaller.
Ask Herman Melville why. After all, he put
The laker, Steelkilt, into *Moby Dick*.
What, said the Lima Don on the gilt-tiled terrace,
What is a Lakeman? Where is Buffalo?
By Erie's grand fresh-water sea, said Melville,
In the land-locked heart of our America.

*Wild-ocean born, wild-ocean nurtured, he,
Though inland all his life. A paradox.
Melville should have lived to see this '57
With boats from Brest and Bergen docking here.
Drifts through our dreams like whales the muskellunge.*

The Other **B**uffalo is many other things.
Things Great ghosts walk in our minds and through our hearts:
1803 Le Couteulx's powdered head, gold-walking-stick.
1864 Bidwell who fought and won at Cedar Creek.
Franciscans, Jesuits, Moravians.
John Neumann of Prague. De Lancey of Westchester.
Baker and Brent. The presbyters of Christ.
Joyce's cane is in the Lockwood Library.
Forever on Albright walls sit Bellows' ladies.

Buffalo is soldiers' headstones going back
As far as Algonquin wars no hand set down—
But the skulls in the earth bear witness to that which was
And will be while man is. First Louis Quinze.
Then Washington's war, and Lincoln's. Monterrey.
Argonne. The second Marne. Haute Normandy.
Bastogne in December. Korea, too.
A Liberty Pole stood on our Terrace once,
Stone eagle blue on wood.
Before that a Liberty Tree.
*The tree of liberty, said Jefferson,
Must be refreshed from time to time
With blood of patriot and tyrant.*
We've not been sparing of our blood round here.
In the Jesuit college's cellar a squat machine
Marks if the great world spider, sleeping, stirs.
Whenever a needle writes on the turning drum,
It means earth's web has quivered once again.
They're seisms in the mind of man as well.
There we're the epicenter quite as much
As Budapest, as Berlin, or as Paris.
The guns of Gettysburg were yesterday.
What reveille for new heroes in Forest Lawn?

*Except that the Lord build the house
They labor in vain that build it.*

Buffalo is churches.

From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same
Spires and domes bisect and quarter the sky.

Buffalo is schools.

Buffalo is also children
Fleet on the playgrounds and beaches,
Grave in the many class rooms.

Buffalo is business.

(Under the fair flesh pulse the arteries.
Systole. Diastole. Peristalsis.)
Banks and mills and stores.
Newspapers' rolling presses.
Cam shafts. Thudding pistons.
Good golem toiling through the smudge and smoke,
Good genii of our lamps that light the darkness.

Take the Skyway over toy boats at their harbor slips—
Here, where the giants tossed a ribbon of stone
Up in the sky, one hears the City breathe!
Above these streets—where Wells and Fargo started,
Erasmus Beadle wrote their saga down—
One rides the circuit of a tamed frontier
From Bethlehem gates to Niagara's tall turbines.
En route the Tonawandas. Consider these Tonawandas,
Makers of carrousels for all the world.
The beasts are gone now from this old frontier
Except when a deer swims in from Canada
And — once in a while — a wolf across lake ice.
Their doubles live again in painted wood,
Heraldic, bright, *rampant*, *couchant* forever,
Breathing calliope's red-nostrilled breath.
In frolic fantasy
Around they go in a blur of rainbow light.

Near the proud water's end
Another rainbow spans the running river
Where, humped like a herd of snow-white buffalo,
Le beau fleuve makes one last long bison leap
Over the glass-green-grass of the cataract's lip.

The white spray of that stampede never settles,
The billion hooves stay loud in memory.

*Yes, we have builded a city
And it is good.
The task is not yet finished.
We build it still.
The task is never finished.
Buffalo is yesterday.
It was tomorrow.
Forever will it be today.*

Commercial Princes of a Pioneer Port

by Marvin A. Rapp

THE early commercial personnel of Buffalo and Black Rock consisted mainly of men who had received their early training along the Atlantic coast. President Jefferson's embargo forced many of these sailors, captains, and commission merchants to leave their salt water jobs for the inland fresh waters prior to the War of 1812. In pursuit of their trades, many gravitated to the Great Lakes region as the westward movement began to gain momentum during the first two decades of the 19th century. The eastern end of Lake Erie proved attractive to many watermen. The fast growing lake marine needed their talents. Many were New Englanders, especially Connecticut Yankees.

Since business was limited in scope prior to the building of the canal, most of the owners of the waterfront commission houses were connected by blood relation, by marriage, or by business convenience. Because these early merchants largely controlled the economic life of the community at the eastern end of the lake, they also exerted a great influence on the politics of the district. They acquired office in two ways, by general ability and as reward for civic service which they had rendered. In

brief, they were the leaders of the community.

The Porter, Barton Company of Black Rock established the first commission house of importance at the eastern end of Lake Erie. Augustus Porter, after surveying the "Mile Strip" for New York State, became interested in the land along the Niagara river. In 1805 all the surveyed lands, village lots, farms, docks, and warehouses at Lewiston and Schlosser were offered for sale. Forming a partnership with Barton and Annin, the Porter brothers purchased plots of land on the south side of Scajagada Creek, along the Niagara River and around Niagara Falls. Over the latter land they obtained a 13-year portage lease from the state which gave the company a monopoly of the trade. Although formed in 1805, the company did not actively engage in the transfer business over the Niagara portage until 1807. It maintained several yoke of oxen there to haul the goods around the falls. Company boats above the falls transported the shipments to Black Rock. There, shippers stored the freight in the Porter, Barton Company warehouse until such time as they shipped

their cargo west.¹ During the early days of its existence, the Porter, Barton Company established business connections with Jonathan Walton and Company, of Schenectady, who forwarded freight over the Mohawk River, Oneida Lake, Oswego River, and Lake Ontario route. Prior to the war, the principal commodity ascending the portage was salt. The average load amounted to 12 barrels of salt or an equivalent weight of other freight. Only one trip a day could be made. From Lewiston to Black Rock the rate per barrel of salt was seven shillings, for general merchandise six shillings per 100 pounds. Merchandise coming in the opposite direction cost only half as much.²

At the Porter, Barton warehouse, the Pittsburgh sailors, captains, and shippers, would meet and discuss prices, profits, and prospects. At this time the Pittsburgh and Salina salt trade was at its height. During the war, the Porter, Barton warehouse was burned. By 1815, however, it was rebuilt. That year the Sill, Thompson Company took over the operation of the warehouse as a branch of the Porter, Barton Company which now moved its main offices to Lewiston. The Sill, Thompson Company was composed of Nathaniel Sill, Sheldon Thompson, and James L. Barton. Barton was the son and Thompson the son-in-law of Benjamin Barton, one of the principal owners of the Porter, Barton Company. These two companies not only monopolized the commercial business of the community but also tried to control the politics.³ The Porter, Barton Company and the Sill, Thompson Company formed business connections with firms in Schenectady and Oswego.

The following advertisement appeared in the *Buffalo Gazette* in 1816:

Notice to Merchants Forwarding Business

J. Walton, Eri Lucher, J. De Graff and A. Van Santvoord, having formed a connection in business, at Schenectady under the firm of De Graff, Santvoord, and Company who have entered into arrangements with Messrs. Townsend, Bronson, and Company, and Mathew M'Nair of Oswego, Messrs. Porter and Barton of Lewiston, and Sill, Thompson and Company of Black Rock, which enable them to forward merchandise from Albany to any ports on Lake Ontario and Erie with the utmost dispatch and correctness. To facilitate the above business, Packets have been established between Oswego and Lewiston, warehouses erected at Lewiston, Schlosser and Black Rock.

The price for transporting merchandise from Albany to Black Rock by water will not exceed \$3.25 per cent. Payments will be received for transportation by either of the above houses as may best accommodate customers etc. . . .⁴

Sheldon Thompson, one of the principal owners of the Sill, Thompson Company, figured importantly in early Lake Erie navigation. He was born at Derby, Connecticut, July 2, 1785. Following in his father's footsteps, Thompson went to sea as a cabin boy when he was ten years old. Within 14 years, he became master of a West India trading vessel. In 1810, because of the embargo, Thompson came to Lewiston and engaged in shipbuilding with J. Townsend and A. Bronson. This company owned stores and warehouses at Oswego and Lewiston. At Lewiston, he met and married Catherine Barton, daughter of Benjamin Barton.⁵ In 1816, the Sill, Thompson Company started its operations at Black Rock. The junior member of

1. Beers, *History of the Great Lakes*, pp. 30-31.

2. Mills, *Our Inland Seas*, p. 70; Smith, *History of the City of Buffalo*, p. 55.

3. *Ibid.*, II, 183.

4. *Buffalo Gazette*, June 4, 1816.

5. Wilner, *Niagara Frontier*, I, p. 295; Walker, "Early Days on the Lakes," p. 290.

the firm was James Lotta Barton, born at Kushong, near Geneva, September 17, 1795. In 1807 he moved to Lewiston with his father, Benjamin Barton. At first he was employed as a clerk in his father's company. Later he moved to Black Rock and served in the employ of Sill, Thompson and Company.⁶ From 1816 to 1818, Sill, Thompson and Company was the only commercial house at Black Rock. After Nathaniel Sill retired, the company assumed the name of the Thompson Company with James Lotta Barton as the junior partner. Two employees of this firm were John L. Kimberly and Sheldon Pease, the former later acquiring a controlling interest in the company. Pease, a nephew of Sheldon Thompson, was born in Derby, New Haven county, Connecticut, August 26, 1809. In 1817 he came to Buffalo to live with his uncle, Sheldon Thompson, in whose employ he remained for five years. The Sill, Thompson Company later became known as Coit, Kimberly and Company, still later as Kimberly, Pease⁷ and Company, and finally, Pease and Trowbridge.⁸

While this commercial development was taking place in Black Rock, Buffalo was also laying a foundation for commercial enterprise. Buffalo had no commercial house of importance until after the War of 1812 when Charles Townsend and George Coit took up the business. Townsend and Coit were both born in Norwich, Connecticut, but, at the age of 15, Townsend went to New York and learned the drug business. He and Coit formed a partnership and, in 1811, came to Buffalo, where they set up a drugstore. As early as 1814, their business led them to dabble in shipbuilding and transportation, and, by 1816, they owned the *Hannah*, the

only ship registered at Buffalo.⁹ In the same year they gave up the drug business to engage in forwarding and became the first company to ship goods westward from Buffalo through the use of a bill of lading.¹⁰ They entered wholeheartedly into commerce and, by 1818, they had constructed a commodious warehouse at the foot of Commercial street.

In 1817, Samuel Wilkeson built a large storehouse near the mouth of Buffalo creek and engaged in the commission business.¹¹ Thus Townsend and Coit and Wilkeson founded Buffalo's commerce just as Porter, Barton and Company and the Sill, Thompson Company founded Black Rock's shipping business.

With the completion of the Erie Canal, many new firms were formed and many old ones changed hands. Most of these houses acted as agents for various canal lines. In 1832, the year Buffalo became a city, the following commission houses were listed in the directory:

Store Houses

There are ten Store Houses for the transaction of Lake and Canal Business.

The following is a list of Forwarding and Commission Merchants, and of the Canal lines which they severally are agents:

Townsend, Coit	Troy and Erie Line and Company
S. Thompson	Troy and Erie Line and Company
Joy and Webster	Pilot Line
Pratt, Taylor	Washington Line and Company
Richard Sears	
James L. Barton	Western Line

9. Smith, *Hist. of City of Buffalo*, II, 185; Wilmer, *Niagara Frontier*, I, 295; Walker, "Early Days on the Lakes," p. 291; White, *Our Country and its People*, I, 170.

10. Smith, *op.cit.*, II, 183; Walker, *op.cit.*, p. 290.

11. *Niagara Journal*, May 1, 1819; Bingham, *Cradle of Queen City*, p. 367.

6. Buffalo Commercial Advertiser, October 7, 1869.

7. John Pease.

8. Smith, *Hist. of City of Buffalo*, II, 183; Walker, "Early Days on the Lakes," p. 290.

Smith and Macy New York and Ohio
Line
Barker and Holt Merchants Line
Norton and Hudson and Erie Line
Carlisle
Augustus Eaton Clinton Line.¹²

Shipbuilders as well as commission merchants contributed greatly to the development of the Niagara frontier. Before 1812 there were few places along the lake where ships could be built. Among the places best suited were Scajaquada Creek below Black Rock, and the River Rouge, near Detroit. On the Canadian side of Lake Erie Moy, Amherstburg, and Chippewa creeks offered natural facilities for shipbuilding. Black Rock was peculiarly well situated for shipbuilding; the creek was ideal and it was comparatively easy to bring material to Black Rock from the east. In 1812 and 1813 the Federal Government made it a temporary United States naval station where a number of fighting vessels were built.¹³

After the war shipbuilding for private purposes began once more. Captain Asa Stanard, of Black Rock, had established a shipyard on Scajaquada Creek in 1812. His apprentice, Benjamin Bidwell, fell heir to the business when Stanard died and the new company was called Bidwell and Davidson, later Bidwell and Carrick, and finally Bidwell and Banta.¹⁴

Sailors constituted another element in the personnel of the Niagara frontier. In the beginning, most of the seamen, sailors and masters, came from the seaboard. Captain Walker describes them as follows:

The majority of commanders, as well as seamen, when I came to the lakes, were from the seaboard. Most of them not only brought with them their peculiar ideas of rigid, arbitrary discipline prac-

ticed upon the ocean, but most of the masters adopted the same style and mode of living among their crews. To give some idea how men before the mast fared upon the lakes at that day, I will note that their food, as a general thing, was salt pork and beef, hard bread or sea biscuit, potatoes, beans or peas; no tea, coffee, sugar, milk, butter or cheese were furnished by the owners. Each seaman and boy was allowed 12 shillings per month to buy such small stores. In addition to this all on board were according to custom allowed one pint of whiskey, as rations, dealt out by the mate each day. As I happened to have a stronger appetite for sleep than for whiskey I could always find some one of the old tars that would stand my anchor-watch in part for the privilege of drinking my half pint of grog, added to his own. These and some other antiquated customs gradually gave way before the march of progress as the number of fresh water masters and seamen multiplied upon the lakes.¹⁵

The life of the sailor was not always as romantic as it is sometimes pictured. Meetings were frequently held by and on behalf of the sailors, and attempts were made to better the working conditions of the men who manned the lake marine. J. S. Buckingham visited Buffalo in 1837 and attended a meeting of the American Bethel Society in which this subject was discussed. He obtained the following extracts on the problem of the sailors:

The theatre of commercial enterprise in the United States is immense. With a country rich in resources beyond a parallel — fertilized by a thousand lakes and rivers — and furnished with every facility for sectional intercourse, we have become, and must remain, essentially a commercial people. Our internal arrangements for the transmission of property, and for the convenience of travel,

12. *Directory for the City of Buffalo*, 1801-1832, p. 12.

13. "Dobbins Papers," p. 298.

14. Walker, "Early Days on the Lakes," p. 292.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 297.

are destined to an almost infinite enlargement. Our inland waters are already covered with boats and vessels, charged with freights of every clime, and crowded with a mass of human life that astonishes the beholder. . . .

Of the agents now employed in this business, by far the greatest proportion are watermen, whose numbers have been variously estimated. But it is believed, that they will number at least one hundred thousand, the majority of whom, as to morals, are abandoned. The vices of sailors have become so proverbial that virtue shrinks from all association with them. As they enter our ports, they are welcomed only by that class of moral outlaws, who infest our cities, and who live about the docks, "seeking whom they may devour." He need not wonder, then, that they travel swiftly the downward course — that their race is quickly run. Their average life, after entering upon the water, is only about twelve years. Accustomed to constant privations and hardships, they soon become reckless of danger, and, to a great extent, regardless of life. Their moral sense is soon extinguished; but their animal and social propensities still survive, and hence they ordinarily approach our shores with their vicious appetites sharpened and inflamed by a coerced and protracted abstinence. Thus prompted, they immediately congregate in those dens of pollution which have been aptly described as the very "nostrils of hell."¹⁶

The report continued to point out that because of the activities of the sailors, the villages along the lake and canal had become a rendezvous for these vagabonds and sharpers. Backing up description with statistics, it was pointed out that in the five years previous to 1836, seven-tenths of all crimes perpetrated in the United States were carried out along the waters of Lake Erie and the canal. The Bethel

society suggested that the way to remove this social condition was to better the working conditions of the seamen. They formulated a plan to protect the sailors from excessive labor, to provide them with leisure time, to remove the strain of sea life by a division of labor, to require that they have a certain amount of sleep, to restore respect for the Sabbath, to give them books to elevate their thoughts and morals, and to provide the gospel as a substitute for domestic relations.¹⁷ Harriet Martineau gave a similar picture of the waterfront:

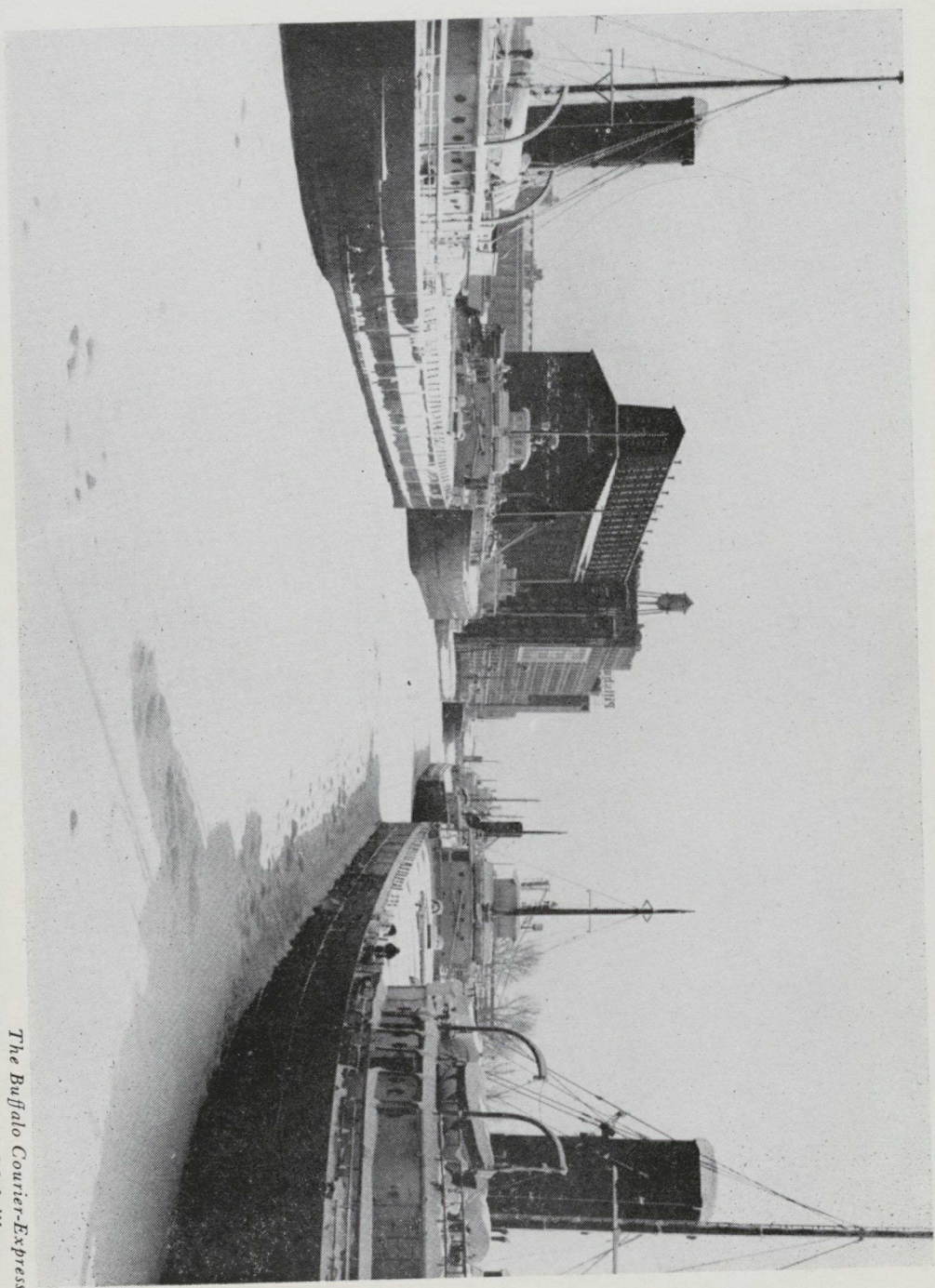
. . . Buffalo is as undesirable a place of residence as any in the free states. It is a rendezvous of all manner of persons; the passage through which fugitives pass from the States to Canada, from Canada to the States, and from Europe and the Eastern States into the wild West. Run-away slaves come here, and their owners follow in hopes of capturing them. Indian traders, land speculators, and poor emigrants come here, and the most debased Indians, the half-civilized, hang about the outskirts. No influence that the mass of respectable inhabitants can exert can neutralize the bad effects of a floating population like this; and the place is unavoidably a very vicious one.¹⁸

This waterfront condition was perhaps due to the lack of village laws covering the harbor, for prior to the incorporation of Buffalo as a city the control of the harbor was mainly in the hands of the commission merchants who had establishments on the waterfront. After 1832 the legislative body of the city began to pass laws and ordinances concerning the operation of the port. Laws were passed covering runners, obstructions in the harbor, fire, Sunday music, and the method of constructing wharves. Thus the municipality was forced to take cognizance of

17. *Ibid.*, II, 23.

18. Harriet Martineau, *Retrospect of Western Travel* (London, 1838), pp. 90-91.

16. Buckingham, *America*, III, 17-19.

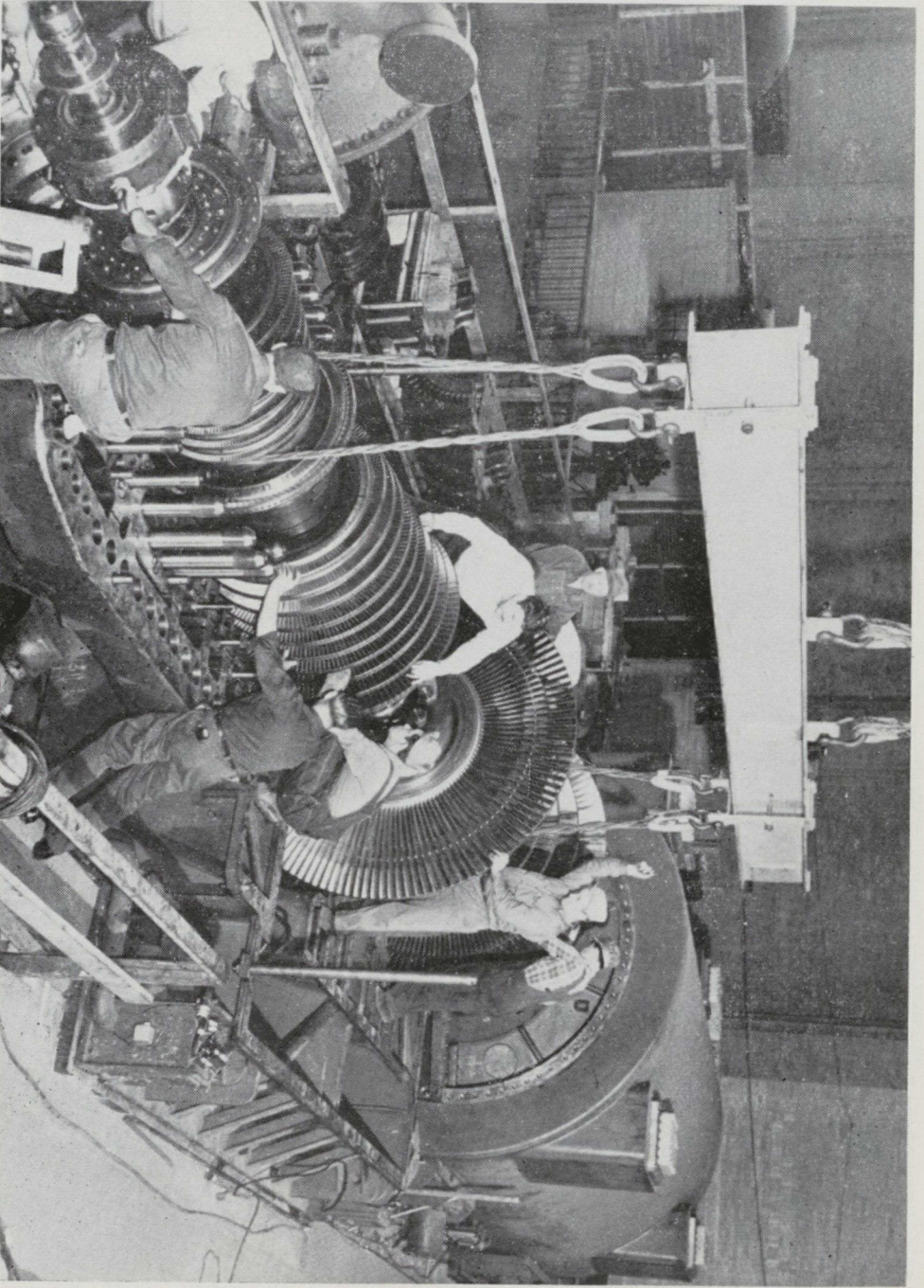


The Buffalo Courier-Express

TO BUILD A CITY: What is a lakeman? Where is Buffalo? By Erie's grand fresh-water sea, said Melville.
In the land-locked heart of our America.



TO BUILD A CITY: These smoky mansard twilights, Lackawanna's Deep organ bass, bronze mirror of fall lake,
 Long light lying subtle and soft on Sunday buildings.
 Gift of Foster and Taylor Funds



TO BUILD A CITY: *Good golem toiling through the smudge and smoke, Good geni of our lamps that light the darkness.*

The Buffalo Evening News



TO BUILD A CITY: Buffalo is churches. From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same
Gift of Foster and Taylor Funds
 Spires and domes bisect and quarter the sky.

and assume responsibility for problems dictated by Buffalo's most important industry.

The shipping elements of the Buffalo waterfront constituted representatives of both the most desirable and the most undesirable citizens. Many of the commission merchants of Buffalo became sheriffs,

aldermen, judges, mayors, and even congressmen. On the other hand, many of the seamen became inmates of the Auburn penitentiary. Taken together these groups represent both the good and the bad which accrued to Buffalo when it became the Queen City of the Great Lakes.

This I Remember — XVII: Lodge Picnic

by Charles S. Illingworth

THIS was a family party, given by a Masonic lodge. Mother detested such outings, so father and I joined with some friends. The ladies had packed baskets with food, china, and silverware, bowls of salad, mostly potato, pans of baked beans, jars of pickles, cold meat, boiled ham, and cakes and pies, all packed in market baskets. Arriving at the foot of Ferry Street, we walked along the dock until we found the barge moored to the dock, the tug lashed alongside with smoke pouring from its stack, and a large banner with the name of the lodge fastened to it.

We did not need the sign, for whenever a member of the party hove in sight, all the folks on the barge, or dock, immediately set up a chorus of "Yoo-hoo, Mrs. B— over here Mrs. B—" or "Hey, Bill, this way, Bill", loud enough to be heard in Fort Erie. When the new arrivals were seated with their friends, they immediately launched into a recital of all the trouble they had getting to the dock. No one paid the slightest attention as each described his own experience, and all talked at once, each louder than the other.

In case you have never seen such a barge, let me describe it briefly. It is a scow — the hull of a boat — with a floor, and a railing about thirty inches high around the edge. In the center of the deck, covering about two-thirds of its length, is the cabin, so called although

really it is a shed with a door at each end, and small, square windows on the sides. It provides shelter in case of a storm. Around the sides are wooden benches. On the deck, even on the top of the cabin, are benches and chairs. The barge had no means of locomotion by itself, but had to be towed from place to place. The picnickers loved it.

Members of the Committee, in washable pants, blue coats, and gaily banded sailor hats attached to their button-holes with cords, stood on the dock looking up the street for late comers; consulting their watches, they gave the word to the Master of the tug, the gang plank was hauled in, and the lines cast off. At this point a man with a basket turned the corner at a dead run, yelling "Wait! wait!" Twenty feet behind him came a lady, running with the motion of a pacing horse, one hand holding her large, white hat, the other clasped to the arm of her daughter.

The Captain held the barge against the wharf, willing hands helped them aboard, and with a toot of the whistle, we started to move. When open water showed between barge and shore, everybody shouted "We're off!" Someone started to sing, "Sailing, sailing over the bounding main," and the outing was under way, only half an hour late.

Slowly we steamed down the Niagara River, singing and waving to the fishermen sitting in their rowboats, while a lot

[*Forty-five*]

of young men went tramping around the deck. Finally we arrived at Edgewater, halfway down Grand Island, and when the barge was made fast to the dock, everybody made a grand rush down the gangplank, to dash to a table and plank down a basket to hold it until the family arrived.

Late comers and slowpokes are forced to share a table. As soon as ma and the girls arrived, they would start to unpack the basket. First a table cloth, then the plates and the silver; in the center, the dish of sliced ham and other cold meats, bowls of potato salad, a plate of rolls, butter, bottles of pickles, mustard, a dish of hard boiled eggs and a pan of beans. A chocolate and a cocoanut cake were all ready to be cut later. With six in the group, the table normally held enough for twenty. Papa got off his coat and hat, grabbed an empty basket and made a bee line to the lunch counter for coffee, five cents a cup, and a deposit for the cup, and ordered ice cream for later delivery. The basket allowed him to carry the six cups of coffee on one trip.

No unattached male need bring any lunch, neither will he go hungry, providing he had an agreeable personality, because nearly every family had an approachable daughter, so if the young man had any gumption at all, by the time the barge was unloaded, he was all set for the eats.

While all this was underway, the kids rush for the swings or any other attrac-

tion and within ten minutes some kid would be back, crying, because he got a punch in the nose for trying to get in another kid's swing.

Now came a general call from various tables that food is ready, and for the next hour everybody was busy eating, interrupted only by one of the party going for more coffee or ice cream. When everyone is so full of food he can hardly move, a member of the committee announced the games. First, the children had races and sports, with prizes; then a fat man's race, a three-legged race, a race for ladies, finally a baseball game between single and married men. No one knows who won, because the scorekeeper had to help ma pack up the dishes.

The tug's whistle dragged us aboard the barge. We cast off and continued the trip around the Island and back to Ferry Street, relaxed and enjoying the cool breeze, the throb of the tug's engine, the swish of the water. It has been a happy day. The collars are wilted, the wash pants are ready for the tub. A couple of straw hats have been smashed, accidentally, of course. The boys who romped up and down the deck on the way out, are now sitting close to daughter, and talking low.

One lady says to another, "I don't care for these outings, I just go for the children's sake". Don't you believe her. She loves them. She had the best time of all.

The historian's profession . . . is an attempt to correct a self-centredness that is one of the intrinsic limitations and imperfections, not merely of human life, but of all life on the face of the Earth. The historian arrives at his professional point of view by consciously and deliberately trying to shift his angle of vision away from the initial self-centred standpoint that is natural to him as a living creature.

ARNOLD TOYNBEE, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, p. 4.

The Poles of the Early East Side

by Dorothy Niedzwiecka

THE Poles who settled in early Buffalo had to cope with the same social and economic prejudices that all new immigrants faced. Opposition to the Poles of the early East Side came from the Irish and Germans who had settled here earlier.

The good jobs in the comparatively few factories of Buffalo in the 1880's had been filled by the Irish and Germans. The Polish people got laborers' jobs in the building of aqueducts and canals. When they built a channel on Fillmore Avenue, those who worked on the surface received fifty cents a day for ten hours of work. The highest paid job was seventy-five cents a day for those who worked in the deep holes. During poor times they had two shifts and the men had to exist on 25 cents a day. The foremen were usually of German descent and those caught loafing or smoking were fired immediately. Later on the Poles began working in freight houses where the pay was \$1.00 a day. When tanneries and meat packing houses sprang up on the east side, the Poles branched out into these jobs.

These were the days when a Pole would not walk down the street alone for fear of being cursed and beaten. Women and children were usually jeered at by the Germans, especially on Peckham Street. The situation became so bitter that Bishop Ryan issued a public directive in all the churches to treat the Poles with greater respect.

One Sunday afternoon on Townsend Street a group of German boys began to call some Poles "Polacks-Modacks." The German boys were on their way to a baseball game, and they began to hit the Poles with their bats. Finally one of the boys ran into the parish hall where a meeting of the St. Stanislaus Society was being held, and informed the members of the fracas. The group ran out and a battle royal ensued. The fight was finally put

down with a great deal of difficulty by Father Pitass.

The scene of another fight was Lovejoy Street where a creek used to run. A German on a horse began to jeer at the two Poles who were walking. The two on foot pulled the rider from his horse, threw him into the creek, and were threatening to kill him, when Father Pitass intervened again.

It appeared that the culmination of these and other events was to be an out-and-out war between the two groups. The Poles heard rumors that the event was to take place on a Sunday afternoon, and they proceeded to arm themselves with bats and axes. However, nothing happened, and surprisingly enough the friction began to wear off after this event.

All during this time the East Side was developing and a good indication of the growth was expressed in an article in the April 1, 1887 *Buffalo Courier*:

Whoever goes through the Lovejoy-Peckham, Broadway-Fillmore section finds the area predominantly Polish. This is a city almost by itself, with about 25,000 people The Real Estate Firm of Bork and Vogt is selling homes for \$500 to \$1,500 A great section of land known as the William Tract on Fillmore and Broadway is wild and unsettled. Today herds of cattle are grazing on the fields and in three years the land will be sold for real estate.

The streets were unpaved and where they existed the sidewalks were of wood. The terrain was full of excavations bridged by boards on two barrels. In the winter-time the people used to take these boards for firewood. Some people tell stories of hiding books in the barrels when they played hooky.

In 1887 an article appeared in the Polish newspaper, *Polak w Ameryce* in

[Forty-seven]

which the women were reproved for throwing garbage and ashes in the streets. They gave that as the reason why "Polacktown" streets were not being paved. However, since the city did not place refuse cans in that section of the city, they were perhaps justified in their actions. This section of the city had been neglected and the situation has been corrected only since 1900.

Common sights in this section were horse-drawn trolleys. It is said that when a trolley came to a hill, all the passengers got out and pushed it up the incline. These trolleys were also used as carriages for married couples. In 1887, *Polak w Ameryce* reported, "After the church ceremony, the whole wedding party got into the trolley and the more noise and the more cigar smoke, the merrier and more successful the wedding."

The biggest event in the life of a Pole was a wedding and it was heralded by young and old alike for weeks before the event. On the date of the wedding, a large crowd would gather at the bride's house and wait for the wedding party to come home from the church. As they approached, a band hired for the event came to the front of the house to play traditional songs while the guests sang. The celebration would then begin in the morning and last until the next morning.

Prior to the wedding the bride's home was cleared of almost all of its furniture and it was usually stored at the home of a neighbor. Even the bedrooms were stripped of furniture because the houses were small and the space was needed. The musicians played in one of the bedrooms while another was used as a makeshift bar. Dancing took place in the living room, and when it was time to eat, tables were set up there. The cooking was done by the bride's parents and relatives in the kitchen. The cooking and baking usually started about a week before the event.

After supper it was a custom to have what is known as "czepiny" where the

bride's veil is removed while the guests sing appropriate songs. Most of the songs were of ten to twenty stanzas but most of the guests knew every word of the song. Then the floor was cleared and the men sought public approval by giving additional gifts to the bride and groom. The best man sat in the middle of the room with a stack of dinner plates in his arms. Then each man in the crowd took a spin around the room with the maid of honor, and for this privilege he paid a slight token. With the money that he gave he was supposed to crack some of the plates. If he gave the couple a silver dollar he could invariably crack a plate with the heavy coin, and the crowd would applaud. A dime or a nickel could not do it, so these were jeered at. Then the crowd would resume dancing, and the festivities usually lasted until it was time to go to work the next day, for years ago weddings did not take place on Saturday as they do today, but commonly on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday. The wedding sometimes did not end with the day, for the guests would keep coming back for a few days to eat and drink up what was left. This custom is known as "poprawiny."

As a little girl I can remember going to weddings of this kind, for they did not entirely disappear until about fifteen years ago. When we were not invited I can remember standing outside the home and looking in through the windows. In fact it was not unusual that one could get some food while standing outside. Some of the uninvited would even dance to the music outdoors.

Today there are no weddings that last two or three days, for with the second and third generations this custom has disappeared. A wedding today is still a big affair, but differs greatly from the early weddings. The wedding breakfast is usually a dinner directly after the church ceremony, a light supper at about five in the afternoon, and another dinner at ten in the evening. The dancing begins about

seven and the wedding party does not disperse until about three or four A.M.

Some people still carry on the custom of the "poprawiny", the bride's mother inviting guests over the next day to eat up the leftovers. Some Poles follow the American custom of a wedding breakfast with no further celebration. A very small percentage of the weddings follow this form, however, because the majority still

celebrate the event with a large wedding in a hired hall. With succeeding generations the songs are still popular, but fewer people know the words. It does not seem likely that this custom will ever entirely disappear.

Many changes have taken place on the East Side of Buffalo but the character of the Polish people has been firmly stamped on the area.

The "General Porter"

by Erik Heyl

IT WAS the year 1833; Andrew Jackson was President of the United States. During the year there had been much activity at the shipyard of J. Carrick at Black Rock, New York on the Niagara River, constructing a steamboat for a syndicate of Buffalo, New York, and Ohio men headed by General Peter B. Porter of Buffalo, of War of 1812 fame. On November 23, 1833 the hull was ready to be launched and in honor of the occasion a large crowd had assembled at Carrick's yard. As the hull slid down the ways it was given the name *General Porter*. Then the guest of honor and accompanying dignitaries adjourned for the obligatory collation and speeches.

While our guests are wining and dining, a short detour into a bit of past steamboat history may prove of interest. For many years the Buffalo Historical Society had had on exhibition a figurehead bust of General Peter B. Porter, which, it has always assumed, came from the steamboat bearing the general's name. Recently found correspondence of Peter B. Porter in the manuscript files of the Society disprove this assumption; as a matter of fact the bust was carved in 1826 for Porter's steamboat *Niagara*, then building.

The letter in question is addressed by Major Donald Fraser at Black Rock, New

York, under date of July 23, 1826 to General Porter at Lexington, Kentucky, and the pertinent portions read as follows:

"... The *Niagara* tomorrow week will have steam put on her, so says the engineer; she is really a beautiful vessel & I think more tastefully painted than the *Clay*. Young Cather [Carter], has with a skill that does him infinite credit, carved for the Stem [Stern?] of the *Niagara*, a Bust with military appendages to ornament her — which Bust — W. Pherson says is to be known by your name. — The *Pioneer* arrived here five days ago with but few Passengers — in 36 hours from Cleveland, I do not know how long from Detroit. She beat the *Enterprise* about two hours, I understand, from Cleveland —"

The writer of the above, Major Fraser, was, judging by the contents of his letter, the General's business manager in Black Rock and very likely also his private secretary, for quite a bit of the letter is concerned with matters pertaining to Porter's family.

To get back to the subject of this article. The machinery for the *General Porter* was constructed by Gibson, Grayson & Company of Black Rock; unfortunately no records have been found setting forth the type of the engine and its size. It was

[Forty-nine]

most likely a square or cross-head engine, arranged with a vertical cylinder, similar to other steamboats built at this period. On the upper deck towards the stern was located the ladies' cabin with fifteen berths, while forward was a cabin with an additional twelve berths. The men's cabin proper with thirty-two berths was located on the main deck in the hold. Her first enrollment document dated June 7, 1834 states that she had "NO GALLERIES AND FIGUREHEAD". In fact not until the enrollment of April 23, 1838 did the documents state that she "HAD NO GALLERIES AND HAS A FIGUREHEAD".

Her dimensions were: length 147' 1", width 27' 10", depth 9' 3", and displacement 342 tons. These were not changed by her later reconstructions. A considerable number of Buffalo citizens joined in ownership, including such well known names as John B. Macy (managing owner), Peter B. Porter, William A. Bird, John Gibson, Horace and Asa B. Meech, Guy H. Goodrich, Bela D. Coe, Edward Bissell, and Asa Sprague. The famous owner of many Hudson River steamboats, Isaac Newton, was among the out-of-state owners. Altogether there were thirty-three.

When navigation opened on Lake Erie in the spring of 1834 *General Porter* was placed on the Buffalo-to-Detroit run for the entire season. On March 22, 1835, while moored at her winter quarters in Black Rock, a cold spell of weather caused the formation of ice in the main discharge pipe within the hull. The pipe broke from the pressure and water poured into the hull so fast that before anything could be done the steamboat had sunk in some twelve feet of water. The Buffalo Fire Department sent two of its pumpers to pump out the hull, the work being accomplished so rapidly that within two days the hull was raised, having sustained comparatively little damage. During the summer months of 1835, sandwiched in between her trips to Detroit, the *General Porter* made frequent excursion trips out

onto Lake Erie and down the Niagara River. The most popular trips were from the foot of Main Street down the Niagara to Whitehaven on the east shore of Grand Island, about opposite the Tonawandas, the steamboat leaving at 9:30 in the morning and returning in the late afternoon.

In 1836 *General Porter* was, as usual, on the Buffalo-Detroit run. On September 20, 1836, bound upward with 600 passengers, she struck a reef just outside the harbor of Dunkirk, New York, and very badly holed herself. She just managed to get to the wharf, where her passengers were quickly taken off by the steamboat *Victory*. There were no casualties, thanks to the prompt work of both captains.

During the season of 1837 *General Porter* was on the usual run, operating throughout the season with no incidents of note. The season of 1838 opened rather late, the *General Porter* not making her first trip to Detroit until April 30, 1838.

To go back a few months now. In December 1837 the *Caroline* affair had occurred, when a British-Canadian expeditionary force crossed the Niagara River from Chippewa to Fort Schlosser (now a part of Niagara Falls) and set fire to the *Caroline* after seizing her and towing her out into the river. Fanatic sympathizers of the Canadian "Patriots", on both sides of the border, tried their best to stir up trouble between the American and Canadian governments. The upshot of this trouble making, which included the organizing of armed raiding forces on United States territory particularly at Fredonia and at Detroit, led the Canadian government to acquire in 1838 a number of American steamboats, manned by British naval ratings, to patrol Niagara River, Lake Erie, and the Detroit and St. Clair Rivers. The *Daniel Webster* and *Milwaukee* were chartered, but the *General Porter* was purchased.

From April 30 until July 1, 1838 *General Porter* appeared regularly in the "List

of Arrivals & Clearances for the Port of Buffalo" but then she drops from sight. Up to the year 1838 she had been enrolled three different times at Buffalo, always showing — with one or two exceptions — the same owners, totalling thirty. But on April 23, 1838 a fourth re-enrollment shows but one single, solitary owner, General Peter B. Porter. Porter apparently chartered his steamer to Charles M. Reed & Company who ran her until July 1838.

To sum up, the steamboat *General Porter* does a disappearing act, especially as any mention in local newspapers is concerned. However, light is shed on her whereabouts in a letter dated July 13, 1838, written by a John Emsley to Col. Halkett, stating that the writer had just parted company with Lieutenant Duffield, R.N., on "board the *Sir Charles Adam*, steamer late the *General Porter*."

The *Sir Charles Adam* was purchased by Admiralty order of August 17, 1838, and by an Admiralty order dated September 5, 1838 she was named *Toronto*, given an armament of four 18-pound carronades and a crew of thirty Royal Navy ratings. During the winter of 1838/39 the hull was considerably strengthened to make the vessel more fit for naval use.

Another most interesting letter in the Peter B. Porter manuscript collection at Buffalo Historical Society is worth quoting in full.

"Captain Sanderson of the British Navy has taken the liberty to forward to General Porter, some of the ornamental part of the Stern of the Steam Vessel once his property, and bearing his name.

Captain Sanderson avails himself of this opportunity to express his perfect concurrence with the General in the just encomiums he Passed on the vessel and Machinery when the British Government (thro' Captain Lawson) negotiated her purchase. The test of experience having proved the correct-

ness of the General's opinion and of his honourable proceedings in the negotiations [*sic*].

Done

on board Her M. Steam Vessel

Toronto late *General Porter*

at Dunville, U.C. this 29th day
July 1839."

Whether the Captain Lawson mentioned in the Sanderson letter was an American or a Canadian is not known; probably an American lake captain, as the same name appears again in an 1845 newspaper advertisement offering the *General Porter* for sale, after she had become a propeller. Undoubtedly the various conferences, meetings and proceedings pertaining to the sale of the *General Porter* to the British government were very hush-hush, though having the tacit blessing of the American government; had they become known the Patriots and their sympathizers, both in the United States and in Canada, would have let out a roar that could have been heard as far away as Ottawa, Washington, and London.

The naval career of H.B.M.S. *Toronto*, which usually was stationed at Grand River, Ontario, was devoid of thrilling incidents; she enjoyed just routine cruises and patrols. In 1841 she was joined by the newly completed H.B.M.S. *Minos*, constructed at Chippawa on the Niagara River, just above the falls.

On the night of September 17/18, 1841 both of the vessels were at anchor off Chippawa, where they had been stationed for some time. All was serene and peaceful aboard both men-of-war; those of the officers and crew not on duty were asleep. Suddenly this idyll was rudely broken by shots fired at the two steamboats from a cannon set up on Navy Island, directly across Niagara River's west branch. A number of shots were fired by this piece, though none took effect. The perpetrators were never discovered; the cannon, it seems, was stolen from a Buffalo armory,

there taken to Navy Island, which, incidentally, has always been Canadian territory. The feelings of the officers and crews on the two steamboats can better be imagined than described.

In the summer of 1842 the British Admiralty issued orders that the engine and machinery of H.B.M.S. *Toronto* be removed and that the hull be used as a stores ship. In the following year new orders from the Admiralty ordered the sale of the hull. There is no record at the Admiralty in London giving the name of a purchaser or the date when she was sold or how much was realized in this sale; she was sold — that's all.

The next notice of *General Porter* is in a Buffalo enrollment under date of October 7, 1843, Number 42, wherein Captain Charles L. Gager is given as both the owner and the master, and where it is specifically stated that she had been changed from a steamboat to a propeller or propeller schooner. Both in the document itself, as well as on an accompanying paper, is an affidavit by Charles L. Gager, which is worth repeating in part: ". . . that he is the sole owner of the Propeller or vessel called the *General Porter* — that the said ship or Vessel was built at Black Rock, New York, in the year 1834, as appears by her last Enrollment which has been destroyed or mislaid, as appears by the Oath of Charles L. Gager dated at this port 7th day of October 1843, and that she has been altered from a Steam Boat to a Schooner Propeller."

The cost of rebuilding the ex-H.B.M.S. *Toronto*, ex-Sir Charles Adam, ex-*General Porter* into the propeller *General Porter* was about \$3,000. On October 8, 1843 *General Porter* cleared Buffalo for the upper lakes. Off Point Abino, Ontario she was caught in a typical Lake Erie fall squall and was dismantled. The main mast broke off at the deck, went overboard and its rigging became entan-

gled in the propeller. The foremast also broke off. The helpless steamer was being driven by the wind toward the Buffalo shore, when the steamboat *Constitution* picked her up in the nick of time and towed her into Buffalo. Apparently the damage sustained by the propeller was considerably more than would appear at first glance, as there is no record of her having left Buffalo again during the remainder of the year.

As a matter of fact the *General Porter's* subsequent career and activities are purely conjectural. A weekly check of Arrivals & Clearances for Buffalo for the years 1844, 1845, and 1846 fails to find any mention of the propeller, nor, oddly enough, could any notices about her be found in the newspapers in the libraries at Cleveland, Detroit, Sandusky, Toledo, and also at Green Bay, Milwaukee, or Chicago. Could Gager have laid her up because she was an unsatisfactory vessel to operate? It seems probable in view of an advertisement placed in the *Detroit Advertiser* and *Free Press* starting January 1, 1845:

"Propeller *Porter* for sale. 18 months old. Warranted to go 7 knots in a calm sea, and carries 3800 barrels. G. L. Gager [*sic*], Detroit."

And again, from February 23 thru July 1847 Gager advertised her anew:

"For Sale. The propeller *Porter*, in good condition and ready for sea without much expense. She will carry 2,000 bbls. flour. For terms — cash apply to C. L. Gager or F. W. Lawson."

One wonders if this is the same Lawson mentioned in connection with the sale to the British Admiralty in 1838.

The enrollment certificate Number 42 of October 7, 1843 was surrendered at Sandusky, Ohio, September 23, 1847 and cancelled because of a change of owners. Who these new owners were is not known because no surrendered or customhouse enrollment was found for that date among the documents issued at Sandusky, and

the master abstract of enrollment is blank. The National Archives also informed the writer that a search of enrollments issued at Presque Isle (Erie) and Detroit failed to turn up anything.

The last thing one reads about the *General Porter* or *Porter* was a close escape from being wrecked on October 22, 1847 off Conneaut, Ohio. This was just a month after Gager had sold her to Sandusky people. The propeller had cleared Cleveland the day before with a cargo of flour and meal. Off Conneaut she ran into a gale and headed for this port to seek shelter. Unfortunately the extra load on the boiler caused the spark catcher in the funnel to become fouled

with soot to such an extent that the fire under the boilers were choked off by lack of draft. *Porter* got onto the bar off the end of the piers and grounded. Several hundred barrels of meal and flour were jettisoned to free the vessel and drifted ashore to the west of the harbor in damaged condition. The following day the *Porter* began working off after she had been lightered and her cargo brought ashore, and was taken into Conneaut for repairs.

She now definitely disappears from the scene and undoubtedly was either entirely abandoned or converted into a sailing vessel, although the latter alternative seems highly improbable.

As One Historian to Another

GOING to Charleston for the first time is like going fresh to any other city, only somewhat more so. The practitioner of local history always finds delightful surprises awaiting him in a new spot, but there is naturally a bit more to be discovered in such places as the one where the Civil War started. When the convention of the American Association of Museums gave your editor a reason to go to Charleston he went not in a belligerent mood, nor a defensive one, for as a reader of history he was sophisticated enough to know that Yankees are not lynched on sight even in the center of Confederate ebullition and that the natives he was likely to meet were undoubtedly capable of appreciating their fellow-citizens of the industrial north at something like their true worth. On the contrary, he expected to enjoy the evidences of a long-established and rich culture in one of America's oldest cities.

In this no reasonable person could be disappointed. The homes and gardens of the Old City were open and their charming inhabitants were expecting the visitors of the Association of Museums. The evidences of good living were plentiful and convincing, the manifestations of the mature area of architecture were everywhere, and there were hints in plenty of other delights of civilization to be discovered by anyone with the taste and the leisure; readers of Josephine Pinckney have received the same hints.

The historian has his antennae spread also for the local explanations of local characteristics, and in Charleston the great topic must be: why was that first fateful shot fired in 1861? Charleston didn't wait to have the question put; the gracious speech of welcome by the Mayor included a remark (for the benefit of certain visitors) about the "war of northern aggression" which served as a light introduction to a fuller statement at a later session by an accomplished local historian, Samuel Gaillard Stoney. Mr. Stoney clarified this momentous bit of history by making clear that the key to an understanding of Charleston was its unique position as the pioneer port of entry to the southeastern part of what is now the United States. It held no less than the key to an empire from the time of its establishment in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.

Charleston for a considerable period thereafter was the only port serving hundreds of miles of coast, with an economic hinterland of colossal proportions by sixteenth-century standards. It was a situation to invite big plans and expansive thoughts, and the city's leaders responded admirably. In a century and a half Charleston had developed a distinctive economy, had learned to think consciously of its political position as analogous to the proud independence of a city-state of ancient Hellas, and exhibited the cultural ripeness that is so impressive to the present.

It is Mr. Stoney's suggestion that it was the sudden and shocking disruption of this imperial ambition almost at the moment of fulfillment that precipitated the bitterly hostile politics of South Carolina after 1830. The geographic position had after all proved to be weak; mountain barriers shut off the interior from Charleston. It was New Orleans, at the foot of the western river system, and New York, with water-level access to the interior, that enjoyed the commanding positions. Above all, it was the industrial technology of the north that dominated the national scene after the War of 1812. Charleston was forced to endure a painful humiliation in accepting a secondary role, and it was this that made John C. Calhoun South Carolina's political hero and that developed the temper to justify secession and the assault on Fort Sumter.

If there is validity in this analysis, and it seems to the editor that it explains much that is otherwise incomprehensible, the credit belongs to Mr. Stoney and his colleagues who have studied their history thoroughly and honestly. Many morals may be drawn from the story they have given us, such as the usefulness to northerners who criticise the south of complete understanding as a basis for their complaints. What interests the practitioner of local history is the demonstration,

if another is needed, of the advantages of getting history on the spot. Historians of the Civil War have written at great length about its "causes," without having explained much. In this case the man on the spot (involved emotionally in its past though he may be) who employs the clarifying methods of history gives us an insight into what these people thought. From that a useful conception of the sort of people they were may be drawn.

CITATION OF THE GEORGIAN BAY LINE FOR THE SAMUEL WILKESON AWARD

*Presented July 12, 1958 for the first time by the
Lower Lakes Marine Chapter of the Buffalo Historical Society*

TO THE CHICAGO, DULUTH AND GEORGIAN BAY TRANSIT COMPANY in recognition of the COMPANY'S continuing contributions to the cultural, educational, and recreational enrichment of the lives of its many thousands of passengers and in preserving through the years Buffalo's position as a port for passenger travel to and from the West.

This citation, which bears the name of a great Buffalonian whose courage, determination and foresight sparked the growth of Buffalo and its harbor, is awarded to the GEORGIAN BAY LINE in memory of the pioneering spirit of its founder—Robert C. Davis—who, early in this century, developed new and unique ideas regarding steamship operation.

Robert Davis believed that there was great opportunity for a company specializing in long-distance cruises as contrasted with the then current vogue for short-run excursions. His dogged determination resulted in the founding of the GEORGIAN BAY LINE and the building of the first ship—the *North American*. . . .

The award recalls the first docking of the *South American* at the foot of Main Street on July 2, 1916. This dock has been used continuously by GEORGIAN BAY LINE ships from that day to the present. . . .

In an age which has seen the demise of many a larger company, the continuance of the GEORGIAN BAY LINE is a tribute not only to the present management, officers and sailors, but also to the ideas of Robert C. Davis, the founder, who designed and planned far in advance of his time.

Books You May Want To See

RAYMOND F. YATES. *Under Three Flags: Western New York from the Ice Age to the Atomic Age*. Pp. 352; illustrated. Buffalo, Henry Stewart, Incorporated, 1958. \$5.25.

This book is directed to junior high school students, but many of our less junior readers will be interested in it. The author, President of the Niagara County Historical Society and conceiver of its interesting museum in Lockport, starts with correct assumptions by stating in his foreword "Our history lies in the land around us . . . here . . . are the real roots of our American heritage. . . . If we know our homeland well then we will know America." His book is truly based on these principles.

Perhaps the most engaging and original portions are those on the founding of communities, in which the author's keenness about antique crafts and tools has full play. These will interest everyone, and are in themselves a contribution in their uniting of the collector's interest with the dynamics of history. In other respects the range of the treatment is most satisfactory, and the profuse illustrations are selected with purpose and imagination, although perhaps the print of the steamship *Caroline* going over the falls reveals an excess of the latter quality.

It may be less valuable as a school text than as a general reference, for it has to be noted here that there are too many typographical errors in proper names and technical terms, and the language is not consistent in its adaptation to grade-school readers. However, these can be eliminated in the later editions that the very real merits of the work warrant.

OBTAINABLE from Mr. Walter Merwin, Blue Cross Building, Buffalo 2, is an elegant reprint of *The Early Life of Mil-*

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lard Fillmore. This little memoir was written by Mr. Fillmore for this Society and has been twice printed by it, but it has been long out of print. The new edition of only 250 copies is not only a service to those who need the work, but is a beautiful piece of printing, done for the bibliophiles of the Salisbury Club by William Watson in the style that is giving him high standing among typographers. The price is \$5.

The Issue's Authors

DR. CHARLES A. BRADY inaugurates something new in *Niagara Frontier* with his grand and moving poem, and his biographical data lucidly annotate the vitality and comprehension to be found therein. His schools were Canisius and Harvard, and he is now chairman of the Department of English at Canisius. He is familiar to all of us as critic to the *Buffalo Evening News*, but how many of us know that he has contributed to a number of leading reviews beginning with *Saturday Review* and the *Times*? Or that his criticism, poetry, and stories have appeared in major anthologies? And that his books will soon number nine, including a third novel, *This Land Fulfilled*, to appear in September? And that he essays that tricky field, juvenile literature?

Since graduating from the Buffalo State University College for Teachers in 1956 Miss DOROTHY NIEDZWIECKA has taught in School 69, on Clinton Street near the city line. In that neighborhood she has seen signs among the younger Polish generation of a loss of interest in their cultural heritage, not only the language but other traits as well. When she wrote "Poles on the Early East Side" she felt that the heritage was unshakeable, but now joins others in thinking that the time has come to begin preserving such things as she set down here.

Politics, Roads, and Taxes in the Holland Purchase

by William Chazanof

WHEN Joseph Ellicott accepted the position of Resident-Agent of the Holland Land Company in 1800, travelers in western New York had been using the Indian trails because practically no other roads existed in the Purchase. The single exception was the road which Duquesne, the French leader, had built in 1753 to connect Lake Erie with Chautauqua Lake. This route became known as the Old Portage or French road and joined Mayville, the Chautauqua County seat, with the town of Westfield on Lake Erie.¹

With western New York heavily wooded, the travelers found their journeys in this area slow, disagreeable, and dangerous. In his excursion to Niagara Falls in 1799, Charles Williamson, the land agent for the nearby Pulteney Estate, described the territory as "settled for about twelve miles; but after that, for about sixty-five miles to Niagara River, the country still remains a wilderness."² One year later, the missionary David Bacon, who worked among the Indians in western New York, journeyed from East Bloomfield to New Amsterdam [Buffalo] with his wife and brother. The minister's brother noted the traveling conditions and recorded: "There was no wagon road, only a path through the woods, sometimes rather obscure, the trees marked to show the way."³

John Melish, the famous English visitor, added his description of another route in western New York: "The road was in some places so bad, that my horse some-

times sunk to the knees, and at one time it was with considerable difficulty that I got it disgorge."⁴ And Timothy Dwight, president of Yale College, experienced difficulties in passing through western New York that were comparable to those of Melish. "The stumps and roots were innumerable, and singularly perplexing, and dangerous," he complained. "The mud, through most of the distance, was knee-deep; and often so stiff as to make it impossible for a horse to extricate himself without extreme labor."⁵

With road conditions as poor as these, even travel by stage coach brought discomforts. Not until 1807, seven years after Joseph Ellicott became Resident-Agent, did the Legislature even grant a franchise for regular stagecoach service in western New York. The American coach at this time carried nine persons inside and one passenger who occupied the low seat beside the driver. The nine people inside sat in rows facing the front of the vehicle. Three filled the front seats, three more occupied the places in the middle row — using for a back-rest a broad leather strap that passed across the entire coach — and the last three sat in the rear row. The front and rear seats had solid back supports whereas the center row had less secure spinal comfort. Sometimes, the leather strap became unhooked and, when this occurred, the three in the middle seats fell back so that their heads struck the stomachs of the passengers in back of them.⁶

1. Young, *History of Chautauqua County, New York*, p. 44.

2. Charles Williamson, "Narratives of Eighteenth Century Visitors to Niagara", Vol. XV, Buffalo Historical Society Publications (1911), p. 399.

3. "Rev. David Bacon's Visits to Buffalo in 1800 and 1801," Vol. VI, Buffalo Historical Society Publications (1903), p. 185.

4. John Melish, *Travels in the United States of America in the Years 1806 & 1807, and 1809, 1810, & 1811* (Philadelphia: Thomas and George Palmer, 1812), II, 351.

5. Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New-England and New York* (New Haven: Timothy Dwight, 1821-1822), IV, 56.

6. Young, *History of Chautauqua County*, New York, p. 120; Jane L. Mesick, *The English*

In the light of these discouraging travel conditions, the prospects for land sales were not too favorable. As Resident-Agent of the Holland Land Company, Joseph Ellicott, therefore, decided to take immediate action leading to the construction of roads. Contrary to the attitude of his neighbor Agent Williamson, who had lavishly spent great sums of money for roads on the Pulteney Estate, Ellicott preferred to achieve his objectives with a minimum of expense. In the fulfillment of his plan to develop economically a few major roads, Ellicott felt it wisest to concentrate on building two routes running from the Genesee River to New Amsterdam [Buffalo]. The first would lie between Big Tree [Genesee] on the Genesee and a point on Lake Erie south of the Buffalo Creek Indian reservation; and was known as the Middle Road. The second would extend from Batavia to New Amsterdam and would parallel the projected Middle Road route. The Batavia to New Amsterdam thoroughfare, eventually called the Buffalo Road, would provide the Company and the settlers with several advantages: it would link the county seat at Batavia with New Amsterdam; it would by-pass the Tonawanda reservation; it would connect with the Genesee Road, which ran from Batavia to Connewagus; and it would enhance the value of the Company land through which it ran. Both roads were completed by 1810. Ellicott succeeded in keeping expenses low in both projects by hiring settlers to do the labor and then deducting their pay from the debts they owed to the Holland Land Company. Thus, there was little outlay of Company cash involved, and payment of salaries was merely a matter of book-keeping.⁷

Traveller in America, 1785-1835 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1922), p. 47.

7. *Reports of Joseph Ellicott*, I, 144. The Batavia to Connewagus Road did not appear on the map which Ellicott enclosed with his annual report.

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The need for roads was so vital, however, that Joseph Ellicott was forced to build more than a few main roads. In 1801, the Holland Land Company started a road from Batavia to a point on Lake Ontario, called the Oak Orchard Road, where Ellicott wanted a trading community. The Company also began work on a route to Big Tree [Genesee], named the Big Tree Road, which would join the road that Charles Williamson had built from Bath. By constructing the Big Tree Road, Ellicott hoped to induce some of the settlers to go farther north to the Company lands.⁸

In addition to these activities, Ellicott also furnished an occasional monetary incentive to stimulate new construction. In 1808, the Resident-Agent subscribed \$200 "towards opening the Chautauqua Portage Road."⁹ The same year he offered to pay \$10 per mile to anyone who would cut a road fourteen to sixteen feet wide from Canadaway [Fredonia] to Mayville. The following year, he volunteered the sum of \$40 to improve the road that ran from Buffalo to Black Rock. And in 1810, the Holland Land Company paid the expenses involved in completing the road from Angelica to Mayville.¹⁰

While Ellicott and the Holland Land Company were busy with their road construction, the turnpike movement was gaining impetus throughout the nation. Based on the plan of permitting private companies to build roads for the profit to be gained from tolls, the turnpike idea soon attracted considerable interest in western New York. In 1805, two com-

8. *Ibid.*, I, 145, 188, 214-216, 248, 249, 271-274, 308, 310, 311, 330-338, 362-364, 397-399; Evans, *The Holland Land Company*, p. 277.

9. David Eason to Joseph Ellicott, 1808, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society. No exact date given.

10. Joseph Ellicott to Samuel Berry, June 29, 1808; Louis LeCouteulx to Joseph Ellicott, August 26, 1809; Joseph Ellicott to William Peacock, ca. November, 1810, *ibid.*

panies sought permission from the Legislature to construct turnpikes west of the Genesee. Both roads were planned to go through the Purchase. One company proposed building a northerly road from Canandaigua to Black Rock, two miles from Buffalo, while the other company wanted a more southerly turnpike from Bath to Lake Erie.

Uncertain of the attitude of the Holland Land Company towards the two turnpike projects, Ellicott's friends in the Legislature sought his advice. Lemuel Chipman in the Senate and Alexander Rea in the Assembly, both anxious to serve the Holland Land Company, first asked Ellicott how they should vote on the proposed turnpike for the northern route. Ellicott told them that he opposed the construction of this turnpike, because he believed that the Holland Land Company, as the largest landowner in western New York, would be expected by the public to assist the turnpike company by subscribing heavily to its stock. Since the turnpike cost far more to construct than the less ambitious roads which Ellicott was building, he was opposed to the authorization of its construction. Furthermore, if the Holland Land Company did buy turnpike stock, Ellicott felt that there was no assurance that it would receive a sufficient dividend. As evidence for this point of view, he cited the case of the Utica-Canandaigua turnpike, which he maintained carried twenty times as much traffic as the planned northern route would, yet had not brought much profit to its investors.¹¹

Ellicott, however, recognized the public demand for turnpikes and agreed that "it would be next to Madness to endeavor to counteract public opinion." He therefore reluctantly advised his allies in the Legislature to co-operate in obtaining an act

of incorporation for the northern turnpike, but only providing that the route passed through Buffalo and the Holland Land Company property. The Legislature passed the bill for the northern route but, as Ellicott had anticipated, the turnpike company had difficulty in raising the funds necessary for the construction. When it finally turned to Ellicott for money, he pointed out that the Holland Land Company had already spent all that it could afford on road building. As a token of co-operation, however, Ellicott did offer some of the Company's wild lands in exchange for stock in the turnpike company. He firmly refused, on the other hand, to invest any Company money. Without financial support from the Holland Land Company, the turnpike project for the northern route failed.¹²

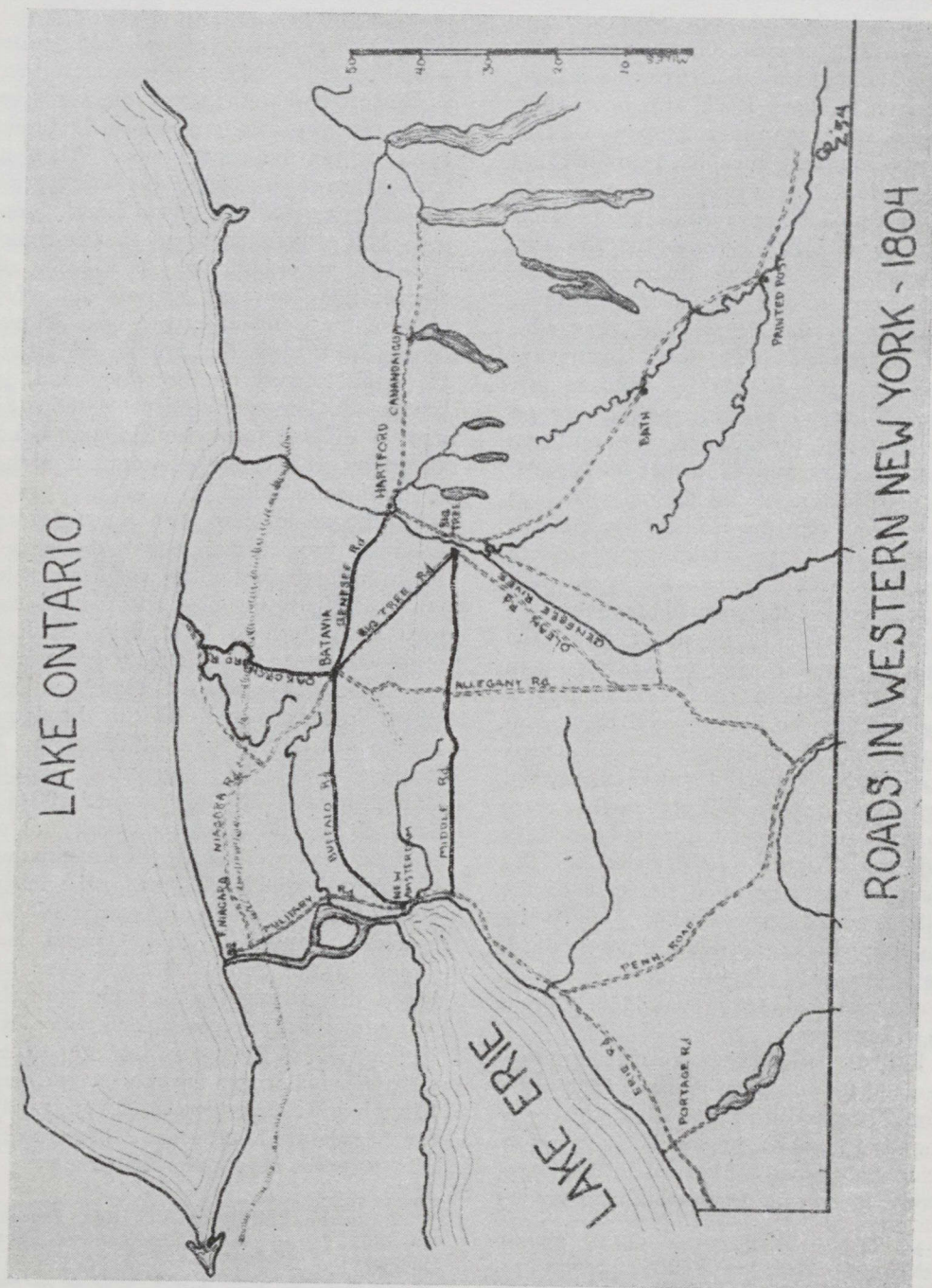
At the same time that the northern turnpike project was under discussion, Philip Church had taken the leadership for a southern turnpike that would extend from Bath to Lake Erie. Such a route would encourage settlers going over the Catskills to populate the southern tier, which in turn would benefit the large landholders in that part of the state. A southern turnpike interested Philip Church because his father owned 100,000 acres of land in Allegany County. This planned road also caught the imagination of Robert Troup, land agent for the neighboring Pulteney Estate. Ellicott and Busti, however, refused to join Church and Troup in this project because they believed that the building of the turnpike was unnecessary — particularly since the Holland Land Company had almost no settlers living where the road would run. Church and Troup persevered and in 1805 the Legislature approved the construction of a turnpike over a southern route.¹³

11. Lemuel Chipman to Joseph Ellicott, February 24, 1805; Joseph Ellicott to Alex Rea, February 14, 1805; Evans, *The Holland Land Company*, p. 284; Joseph Ellicott to Alex Rea, February 7, 1805.

12. Joseph Ellicott to Alex Rea, February 14, 1805; Evans, *The Holland Land Company*, p. 284.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 282. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, May 17, 1805, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society.

LAKE ONTARIO



ROADS IN WESTERN NEW YORK - 1804

When the directors of the newly created company for the southern turnpike approached the Holland Land Company to invest money in this project, Ellicott and Busti faced a dilemma. Although they genuinely believed that the project would not benefit their Company for another fifty years, they feared the censure of the settlers if they refused to support it. Ellicott was convinced that the residents would interpret such non-support as overt hostility to road building, and he told this to Busti: "It may & doubtless will be echoed by some envious Characters and probably by these very People, [Church and Troup] that the Holland Company are not disposed to lend their Aid to public Improvements although they are the Proprietors of nearly 1/9 Part of the Whole State." Ellicott and Busti therefore consented to give up some land on the Purchase for shares in the turnpike company as a gesture of good will, but the movement for the Bath to Lake Erie turnpike died out when other support could not be obtained. Not until 1810 did the Holland Land Company start a narrow road, not a turnpike, from Angelica to Lake Erie. Work on the route was finally completed in 1814.¹⁴

Despite Ellicott's road-building efforts, the highway that he had helped to construct between Batavia and Buffalo soon fell into disrepair because of insufficient maintenance work. Traveling conditions became so difficult that the residents on the Purchase decided to take action. Some of the settlers of Niagara County held a meeting on December 3, 1811 and chose a committee to meet with a similarly constituted group from Genesee County. The residents of Genesee County appointed a committee of six; Company clerk James

14. Paul Busti to Joseph Ellicott, May 11, 1805, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society; Paul Busti to the President of the Erie Turnpike, October 27, 1806, Dec. 22, 1806, Joseph Ellicott Papers, New-York Historical Society; Evans, *The Holland Land Company*, pp. 283, 284.

W. Stevens served as chairman, while Ellicott's brother Benjamin agreed to assist as a committee member. On December 12, the two committees met and petitioned the Legislature to approve a lottery for \$15,000 and to allocate this money for the improvement of the Batavia to Buffalo road. The *Buffalo Gazette*, the local newspaper, added its support to this plan by eloquently and energetically campaigning for the improvement of this highway. Responding to these appeals, the Legislature voted "a grant of \$5,000 for improving the Road from the Genesee River to Buffalo."¹⁵

Despite this and other efforts to keep up the roads, travelers in western New York, settlers on the Purchase, and Resident-Agent Ellicott were still plagued by inadequate highways as late as 1812. The problem of poor roads nearly defied solution. In 1812, only 26,000 people lived on an area that spread over some 5,000 square miles of western New York. While the resident land owners had complied with the road tax that required them to do a certain amount of work annually on the highway,¹⁶ Ellicott had helped the situation by donating Company money and land and by constructing some roads himself, but he had depended too heavily on the creation of the new County of Genesee to stimulate road building activity on the part of town governments in that area. The creation of Genesee County did increase road building because the towns in the county no longer paid taxes to Ontario County and were now able to

15. Much of this paragraph from the *Buffalo Gazette*, December 24, 1811; January 9, February 5, 1812; Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, July 15, 1812, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society.

16. *Pomfret Assessment Rolls, 1810-1823*. When the Legislature created the County of Chautauqua in 1808, the town of Pomfret was formed from the town of Chautauqua in Chautauqua County. These rolls spelled out in detail the road building of the settlers. The rolls are kept at the Town Clerk's Office, Fredonia, New York.

spend their money for improvements west of the Genesee. But the new county could not solve the road problem alone, and the amount of funds that the state government spent on highways in western New York was small compared to the need. In brief, the problem of roads in western New York was the same one that confronted the rest of the United States: too few people lived on too large an area at a time when they had too little money. And Ellicott could only hope that time and the nation's growth would bring about a solution.

At the same time that the problem of poor roads was troubling Joseph Ellicott, the question of taxation also presented him with serious difficulties. Taxes had reduced Ellicott's profits and, so far as he was concerned, also had threatened to destroy the Holland Land Company. The tax situation—even more than the problem of poor highways—had made him decide to enter politics and later to accept the post of Genesee County treasurer.

When the County of Genesee was organized in 1803, Resident-Agent Ellicott, as county treasurer, decided to make every effort to keep tax assessments at a low rate. Thus, as the time arrived for levying taxes to meet county and town expenses, Ellicott spent much time "with the Supervisors" discussing the subject. The Holland Land Company profited from these conversations in 1803 because the Town of Batavia, a part of the Holland Land Company territory, "paid the least taxes in the Dollar of any of the Towns in the County." Moreover, Ellicott maintained that the tax would have been lower than the previous year "had it not been for the circumstances of [Genesee County] being obliged to levy on the County the sum of \$1,600 for the purpose of paying its proportional part of the expense of erecting the Bridge over the Genesee River."¹⁷

17. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, November
[Sixty-two]

Even the tax money that was paid by the Holland Land Company to the county was not completely lost, however; for Ellicott arranged to channel several tax appropriations of 1803 into projects that would benefit the Company. Some of the tax money, for example, was spent on roads and bridges located on the Purchase, a fact which Ellicott promptly called to the attention of Busti:

... the great part of the money raised for County purposes were appropriated in the Erection of Bridges and Repairing and opening Roads immediately on the Company's lands as well as the greater part of the contingent expenses of the County being expended immediately among our settlers.

Ellicott also reminded Busti of the less desirable situation in previous years, when Ontario County had spent no money for internal improvements on the Purchase. He pointed out that of "the whole Amount of the Tax that the Company has heretofore paid [to Ontario County] not any of it has in any manner been expended in such a way as to benefit the Company a single Cent." Joseph Ellicott therefore concluded that the lower taxes levied by the newly constituted Genesee County and its willingness to spend some of the tax money for the benefit of the Holland Land Company proved "the manifest advantages that the Company has attained by separating their territory from the County of Ontario."¹⁸

Eighteen hundred and four was a crucial time for the directors of the Holland Land Company, and it was fortunate that Resident-Agent Ellicott and his associates were able to use their influence to lower the tax rate that year. The Dutch owners of the Company had by now reached their financial limits. Expenses from their American lands, especially those that they owned in Pennsylvania, had mounted

17, 1803, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society.

18. *Ibid.*

steadily. In addition, the Dutch directors were being heavily taxed at home because of Napoleon's ambitions, and any profits in America were being drained off rapidly to Holland. The Company directors, therefore, informed Agent-General Busti that the Purchase had to become self-sufficient. Fortunately, it was at this time that the county reduced taxes. In 1803, the Company had paid \$4,548.64 in taxes; the next year, the total dropped to \$3,399.10. The taxation in mills for each town in Genesee County revealed that in Batavia, where the Company lands lay, the tax rate was not so high as in the other three towns.¹⁹

Towns	Taxation in Mills per Dollar	
	1803	1804
Northampton	2.81.....	2.3
Southampton	4.74.....	3.3
Leister	2.71.....	2.1
Batavia	1.41.....	1.

Ellicott's satisfaction over the tax rate suddenly changed to anger when the tax levy increased sharply in 1805. In that year, the taxes almost doubled as the tax rate rose from one mill to one mill and eighty-seven hundredths, and the total Company taxes climbed from \$3,399.10 to \$5,525.58. As a partial explanation of this tax jump, Ellicott told Busti that the creation of three additional towns on the Purchase in 1805 had increased the town expenditures, for the Legislature had divided the town of Batavia into the towns of Batavia, Chautauqua, Erie, and Willink. However, the Resident-Agent indignantly refused to believe that the expenses of the new towns required "near the amount that has been assessed."²⁰

19. Evans, *The Holland Land Company*, p. 285; *Reports of Joseph Ellicott*, I, 228; Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, November 21, 1804, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society.

20. *Reports of Joseph Ellicott*, I, 226, 287, 295; Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, November

Angered by the rising tax rate, Joseph Ellicott fought the increase with all the weapons at his command. He personally advised the Board of Supervisors, the taxing officials of the county, against approving such a tax increase, but the Board ignored his counsel and acted "by their own Discretion." Although Ellicott, as county treasurer, had previously exercised sufficient influence over the supervisors to keep the tax rate low, the Board now began to resent his unrelenting pressure. Its members had come to believe that the Resident-Agent was more concerned with profits for the Holland Land Company than with the welfare of the settlers on the Purchase. Thus, contrary to the county treasurer's wishes, they boosted taxes.

Ellicott next challenged the legal right of the Board to nearly double the taxes. To determine the Board's authority, he consulted David Ogden, the Company lawyer. Ogden's reply disappointed the Resident-Agent, for he informed Ellicott: "The Powers of the Board of Supervisors in this State are great, and their Discretion almost unlimited." Ellicott, in turn, explained the situation to Busti: "In this County, the several officers elected by the People appear not to be governed by established Principles in the Discharge of their Duties, but either their own erroneous Conceptions or by Information casually or incorrectly obtained . . ."²¹

Ellicott then tried another stratagem: he refused to pay his Company's taxes punctually. It had been the policy of the Genesee County Board of Supervisors to accumulate bills throughout the year, and then, at one meeting, to vote to pay all of its debts by passing a tax levy large enough to cancel out these obligations. Previously, the Board could always count on the prompt payment of the Holland Land Company to help it to settle its debts. But when Ellicott kept the Company from

21, 1804, December 5, 1805, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society.

21. *Reports of Joseph Ellicott*, I, 286, 289.



sending in its taxes on time, the Board soon found itself embarrassed by its inability to pay its own creditors. To encourage the Company to pay its bills without delay, the Board was forced to accede to Ellicott's request that it carefully and regularly audit its accounts. The Resident-Agent hoped that more efficient book-keeping methods would limit lavish and unwarranted expenditures and thus make possible lower taxes. Ellicott considered that he had made a real gain in winning this concession and proudly reported to Busti that in the future, the Genesee County Board of Supervisors "will audit the Accounts, make an estimate of Expenses, and Issue Orders on the Treasury in October the Time established by the law for that Purpose, instead of the Month of February as they have hitherto done."

For a time, Ellicott's activities helped to keep taxes close to the 1805 figure. In 1807, for example, the Company paid \$5,633.50, a small increase of \$107.48 over its bill for 1805.²² This slight tax rise did not anger the Resident-Agent, for the additional money would benefit transportation facilities near his Company's property by bridge construction. The Legislature had passed a law which ordered the Counties of Ontario and Genesee to raise equally the sum of \$4,000, or \$2,000 for each county, for the building of a bridge across the Genesee River. To collect the additional \$2,000 in revenue, Genesee County had boosted its taxes. Considering the fact that in 1806 the county had raised a total of \$8,410.35 in taxes including those paid by the Company, while the following year the county collected \$9,991.98, or an increase of \$1,581.63,

22. The author was unable to locate what the Company paid in taxes for 1806. According to Ellicott's Annual Report of 1807 in the *Reports of Joseph Ellicott*, I, 345, Ellicott explained without citing figures that the 1807 tax exceeded that of the previous year. Since this increase amounted to about \$100 over the 1805 figure, the 1806 taxes were probably similar to those of 1805.

Ellicott felt no alarm at such a change. Had the Legislature not ordered Genesee County to pay the \$2,000 for the bridge, the total county taxes for 1807 would have decreased \$419.37.

Despite all of Ellicott's efforts, the taxes rose after 1807 and increased steadily each year until 1812. The Holland Land Company paid \$7,574.42 in taxes for 1808 and \$8,717.21 the following year. In 1810, the Company remitted \$9,314.74, and, in 1811, this figure climbed to \$12,142.44. After four years of steady increases, the Company taxes declined in 1812 to \$11,975.15.

Unlike his attitude in 1805, when he had stormed at the Board of Supervisors for increasing taxes, Resident-Agent Ellicott had resigned himself to these rising levels after 1808. He had hoped, of course, that the taxes would have decreased "in the same Ratio as the Lands [Company] were sold off"; however, he soon recognized that he could no longer control the taxing policy of the county. In an effort to explain the situation to Agent-General Busti, he blamed the spiraling taxes on two major factors: first, the cost of government had increased with the creation of the Counties of Allegany [1806], Niagara [1808], and Chautauqua [1811] and the organization of the newly formed towns in these counties; and second, the settlers, by their indifference, had permitted the Boards to effect such tax increments. Ellicott also candidly admitted to Busti that he could not single-handedly force the reduction of taxes. Convinced that the solution to the problem of taxation now lay in the hands of the settlers, he stated: "It is clear . . . that our Taxes will continue high until the People themselves remedy the Evil. All the Power is with them. . . ."²³

In addition to his explanation to Busti of the reasons for his inability to reduce the levies of the Company, Ellicott tried to cheer up the Agent-General by showing

23. *Reports of Joseph Ellicott*, I, 345, 388-390; II, 13, 40, 41, 97, 98, 117.

him where the Company was saving money on taxes. He pointed out that while the settlers on the Purchase were obligated to meet the highway tax, the Holland Land Company was free from this obligation. The highway tax compelled the residents eligible for road service to work a minimum of two and a maximum of thirty days in any one year, or to pay an equivalent in money; the Holland Land Com-

pany, as a non-resident, was exempt from this tax.²⁴ An expert mathematician, Ellicott equated the highway tax for the year 1808 in dollars and concluded that the residents actually paid more taxes than did the Company.

24. *Ibid.*, I, 391. The State of Pennsylvania taxed the Company lands the monied equivalent of the highway tax.

This I Remember – XIX: Christmas

by Charles S. Illingworth

CHRISTMAS time was a season of feasting and good cheer at our house, for father would bring home such delicacies as layer raisins, which are raisins as large as grapes dried on their own stems.

Smyrna layer figs: wooden boxes of figs as large as tea cups, pressed and packed in Turkey. Pulled figs, smaller fat figs that grew further north. Fard dates, as long as my little finger, thick as my thumb, black and sticky. Hallow dates, golden in color, smaller, but as sweet as honey.

Crystallized ginger from China, candied fruits, pounds of it. Large budded walnuts, paper shell almonds, pecans, and Brazil nuts, in bowls on the sideboard. Dishes of candy in every room.

More activity in the kitchen.

Cracking and blanching almonds, then roasting them in large pans spread with butter in the oven. Suet and plum puddings cooking in the double boilers. In the ice box a four-rib roast of beef, pink with rings of white fat, ready for the oven. And the most beautiful sight of all, the white arm of the cook holding a pie tin at eye level on her finger tips, as she trims the surplus crust from around the edge.

In the sitting room a sheet is spread in one corner, and everybody helps put up the tree and hang the ornaments, strings of popcorn, popcorn balls, candy canes, and holders for the candles.

Everyone is excited. Two of mother's lady relatives, single, are over from Kingston. Grandfather Illingworth is coming up from Medina in the morning. TOMORROW WILL BE CHRISTMAS!

I had gone with father and bought a pair of long gloves for evening wear for mother. Mother had taken me to Chouf-fet's to get a gold watch chain for father, also we bought a sash for the maid to go with the dress mother was giving her. I hid them under my bed, where I also had a present for Mama Scobell.

I hung one of mother's stockings on the mantle, and went to bed. CHRISTMAS MORNING. It is dark but I get up and go down stairs, the house is quiet. I light a wall fixture, take a look at the tree, then let out a yell. The first thing my eyes behold is a team of hair covered horses hitched to a stake wagon, just like one of father's.

One of the men at the store had pasted part of a baking powder label on some thin wood and fastened it on each side of the dray so I had a sign on my wagon the same as on our big wagon. I ran up to my parent's room and jumped on their bed—they were awake—hugged and kissed them, then ran back to the tree.

Upon examination, I found that I could unhitch the horses from the wagon. It had a tongue and double whiffle-tree, the

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stakes at the back of the wagon were removable, and had a pair of skids.

By the time I had examined all this mother had come down, and reminded me to bring down my presents for the others; by the time I had carried them to the tree, father was down. Father said we would have to eat breakfast before opening all the presents, so we waited on pins and needles. He told me that Albert, the chief clerk, promised to make enough boxes and bags to fill the wagon.

Eva and Lillian, the girls from Canada, and Mama Scobell came down, so we went to breakfast. Sausage meat patties, fried potatoes, two dishes of toast, and Arabian Mocha coffee. After we finished, and I didn't eat much, we went to the tree, and the presents were given out.

Mother got the material for a silk dress from father and my gloves to go with it, and gifts from all the others. Father got a pearl pin for his ascot tie from mother. I gave Mama Scobell a dressing sac, trimmed with lavender ribbon. When I gave father his watch chain he put it on right away.

Father called in the maid and mother gave her the dress and told her the dress-maker would make it up for her. I gave her the sash and Mama Scobell gave her a parasol. When father gave her an envelope with two weeks' wages in it, she started to cry and ran back to the kitchen.

In addition to the team and wagon, I got a Daisy air rifle, two freight cars for my train, the Wyoming series, three books by E. S. Ellis, a Henty book, a leather school bag, some kid gloves and some clothes. The stocking held an orange, a bag of marbles, some nuts and a necktie. Everyone was pleased with their presents, and I got more than I expected.

After the excitement died down, Mother said we had better help Christine. Father and I put two extra leaves in the table and went back to the tree.

Soon a hack brought grandfather Illingworth from the station and he had to

examine all the presents; there was a necktie and muffler for him from mother. Later arrived two young men, friends of father, and about one o'clock Christine announced dinner.

When we sat down at the table, grandfather said grace. I watched him, as with closed eyes and bowed head, he asked God's blessing on the food and upon us all.

Father carved thick, round slices from the roast, and the maid passed it, then she served brown and sweet potatoes, parsnips browned in the juices of the meat, golden squash, and then filled the glasses with claret from the decanter.

Every one laughed and talked gaily, plates were refilled until all had a second helping. Then the table was cleared and the plum pudding was brought in, which father served, while mother served the tea. Nuts, raisins, figs and candy followed with coffee, if you wished.

One of the young men excused himself and in a short time drove up with a span of horses and a two-seated sleigh. The two young ladies from Canada and his friend went for a drive through the parks and around the city, returning in a couple of hours.

Father fell asleep in the Turkish rocker, grandfather took off his coat and lay on the couch in the dining room. I started to read Wyoming, Mother and Mama Scobell went up to mother's sitting room. The house was quiet and peaceful.

Shortly before six Christine announced she had "whipped up" some hot biscuits and honey, if we were ready. So we all sat down and ate that, with tea, Christmas cake, candied fruit and port wine. After supper father lighted the candles on the tree. The lamps were lighted (no gas), Mama Scobell played the piano. Now and then we heard the bells of a passing cutter as we talked.

Before nine o'clock I was sleepy and went up to bed. The day was over, Christmas had ended. It was a joyful one.

The Story of the Memorial to the Thirteenth Regiment

by I. Frank Mogavero

THE huge boulder that we are rededicating today is, geologically speaking, just another piece of granite of a kind that may be found in many localities. Historically speaking, however, it is no ordinary stone, for to the people of our community it is now one of the last links binding us to the Thirteenth United States Infantry Regiment which was stationed at Fort Porter at the end of the last century. Very cordial relations existed between the officers and men of the regiment and the citizens of Buffalo so that when it was ordered to active duty in the Spanish-American War, its fortunes were followed with the keenest interest.

After acquitting itself so honorably and heroically at San Juan Hill in Cuba, the remnants of the gallant regiment limped home one by one to the fort to convalesce or to die and be buried in the Buffalo Soldiers' Plot in Forest Lawn Cemetery.

When, after the war, word was received that the "Fighting Thirteenth" was to be transferred, sorrow filled the hearts of both soldiers and citizens. The latter quickly decided to erect a suitable memorial to keep vivid the exploits of the regiment. The consensus was that the memorial should be a lasting one — any one which would reflect the ruggedness, dignity, and valor of the men to whom it was to be dedicated.

After some discussion, it was decided that a boulder would be most appropriate. It was then that attention was focussed on a huge, egg-shaped boulder measuring nine feet from tip to tip and about eight feet across lying in the gorge of the Niagara River at Lewiston. Even there among so many other immense rocks, this particular boulder stood apart. There was something majestic and solemn about this boulder worn smooth by the impatient river for hundreds of years. For a century

preceding its discovery by the committee, it was one of the most conspicuous objects of this scenic spot.

That the choice of the committee was an excellent one and that it had selected no ordinary rock was soon apparent for immediately the Indians of the area protested vehemently to its being removed. Ancient Indian beliefs held that it was impregnated with spirits and that it possessed magical powers. Old fishermen of Lewiston also protested, imputing the good fishing at that spot to the luck and charm brought by it.

It was pointed out to the Indians that the rock was so well known and believed that it should be given an honored position on hallowed ground so that all might see it and join in its praise. They yielded.

Mayor Conrad Diehl of Buffalo suggested that since everyone wished to show appreciation for the heroic actions of the Thirteenth that no personal subscription toward the cost of the memorial be more than five dollars.

Contributions came quickly. Many pennies were given by the school children of the city. For many of these children, it was a sacrifice from the heart, for a penny in those days might very well have represented a week's allowance. Six hundred and fifty dollars was collected.

The boulder, which was estimated to weigh between 30 and 40 tons, was laboriously lifted from the gorge floor, placed on a railroad flatcar, brought to Buffalo, and set down at the western end of the fort's parade ground facing the river.

Elaborate dedication ceremonies were planned. Governor Theodore Roosevelt, himself a veteran of San Juan Hill, was expected to be present. However, the regiment was suddenly ordered to leave immediately for service in the Philippines and the dedication ceremonies were cur-

tailed. The memorial was unveiled at sundown on April 19, 1899, and the next day at five P.M. Mayor Diehl and some of the members of the Committee went to the fort and presented the memorial to Colonel Smith. The men of the Thirteenth viewed the boulder and within the hour marched out of Fort Porter for the last time.

The boulder remained on the fort grounds for more than fifty years, becoming a familiar landmark to the people of Buffalo. It was especially a source of happiness to the youngsters of the area who climbed over it and slid down its sides. Some of you may have done so as children. I know that Mayor Sedita has and I know I have. It was used also as a vantage point from which to watch baseball games on

the baseball diamond that was constructed a short time later just to the east of it.

When the new approaches to the Peace Bridge were constructed about four years ago, the landmark was despoiled of its bronze plaque and rude bulldozers buried the venerable memorial.

Through the efforts of the Buffalo Historical Society and with the aid of Mayor Sedita, other city officials, and various veterans organizations, the stone was unearthed by the John W. Cowper Company and brought to its new location.

We are happy that this famous boulder has been restored to public view and we of the Buffalo Historical Society assure you that this special piece of granite, representing a bit of the wonderful heritage of our glorious country, will always be given the respect and care we owe it.

From the Commander of the Thirteenth

The following letter was written to be presented at the November ceremonies.

THE officers and men of the 13th United States Infantry join me in expressing heartfelt appreciation to the patriotic members of the Buffalo Historical Society for their interest and endeavors resulting in the uncovering and rededication of a memorial commemorating the gallantry of the 13th Infantry Regiment during the Spanish-American War. The men of this Regiment are intensely proud of its history and acutely aware of its many gallant actions. It was therefore with considerable interest and pride that we learned of the activities of your society in our behalf.

It may be of interest to your society to know that our trophy room, located in the Command Building, contains several trophies associated with the city of Buffalo. Among these are an original muster roll, hand inscribed on parchment, dating back to 1812 when the 13th was on the Niagara Frontier, and a large silver trophy pre-

sented to the 13th Infantry by the Saturn Club of the City of Buffalo in 1898, to commemorate the Santiago Campaign. Also in our trophy room, among the Regimental Colors carried during past campaigns, is the National Standard carried by the Regiment during its famous assault on Vicksburg in 1863. The trophy room is an inspiration to the members of the Regiment and serves daily to remind all of the duty and sacrifice expected in our nation's behalf. The memorial that your society is rededicating serves much the same purpose. Together they comprise the cornerstone upon which is built the essential quality of military greatness—*esprit de corps*. All this is in the American tradition. It must be refortified if American arms in the future are to successfully meet the test of war, if our military heritage from the past is to guide the generations of the future.

It may be of interest to you also to know that the 13th Infantry Regiment has served in Germany from August 1956 to

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the present as a part of the NATO forces shielding Western Europe against the ever present menace of Soviet Communist imperialism. In February of 1959 the 13th Infantry will return to the United States under the Gyroscope program and become assigned to the famous First Infantry Division now stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas.

The 13th Infantry salutes the Buffalo

Historical Society and wishes its members success in their future endeavors.

Sincerely,

RICHARD G. CICCOLELLA
COLONEL, INFANTRY, COMMANDING

Mannheim, Germany

30 October 1958

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 97TH ANNUAL MEETING

Award of the Red Jacket Medal to Charles Burchfield

by President Julian Park

WELCOME, whether members or guests, to our 97th annual meeting. We hope that if you are a guest the spirit of the meeting, if not the invitation of the member whose guests you are, may persuade you to take a more active part in the work of the Society by becoming a member. It is too bad that the so-called improvements that have caused the scene of devastation around us have also caused inconvenience in your access to the building; but it must be remembered that beauty has to give way to the saving of five minutes and that traffic jams will soon be a thing of the past. The whole situation reminds one of the Chinese tourist being shown the sights of New York in a day, hustled from a local subway train to an express, and, out of breath, hustled back again. At the end of the trip his sponsor triumphantly remarked, "Well, we saved ten minutes." The visitor thought it over and then said, "Yes, and what do we do with the ten minutes?"

The destruction of beauty is more than an aesthetic matter, important as that is. Believe it or not, it may somewhat imaginatively have to do with history. Imagine what scenes those trees have witnessed. They were there when hundreds of American soldiers encamped on the meadow in the war of 1812, and they were still there

when the administration of the Pan-American Exposition spared them and visitors were grateful for their shade. An anthology of praise for our trees would not be too difficult to compile. Let me, for example, quote from André Maurois' autobiography. He spent a few months in Buffalo during the war as a visiting professor at the University. Before he came, he was told "You won't like Buffalo. The climate is very tough. There are only two seasons there — winter and August. And the city is entirely industrial. As a matter of fact [he went on] I really liked Buffalo. No city in the world possesses finer trees. Above wide avenues they form leafy, Gothic arches. The sea of verdure which I saw from my window at the Lenox reminded me of my house at Neuilly and the green waves of the Bois. Even the cemetery had the gracefulness of a beautiful park . . ." I could quote much more but it would be too saddening.

Our annual meeting has taken on a different character from the traditional stuffiness of the years past. Up to a few years ago those members who braved the January weather were small enough in number to be accommodated in the Director's office. We have been trying to inculcate sociability and a sense of (excuse me) togetherness, or at least a sense of

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interest, perhaps, even of enthusiasm, for the civic purposes which have always motivated our program and activity. Said Millard Fillmore in his inaugural address at the first annual meeting of the Society in 1862: "Let this institution be the grand repository of everything calculated to throw light on our history." Well, not quite everything; there wouldn't be room. The variety of things that throw light on history are, of course, amazing. For a sample of them, look around; and then, if you can find a copy, refer to one of our most interesting publications, *The Book of the Museum*.

One of the many things that distinguish Dr. Glover's report is its concern for the future. It is, as you have noted, more than a record of the past. Never have the members of the Society been more interested in its varied activities. The Board of Managers relies heavily on the advice furnished by committees of the membership. Monthly meetings, for example, are held by the Advisory Committee; the Committee on Historical Markers, with more specialized program, is no less valuable.

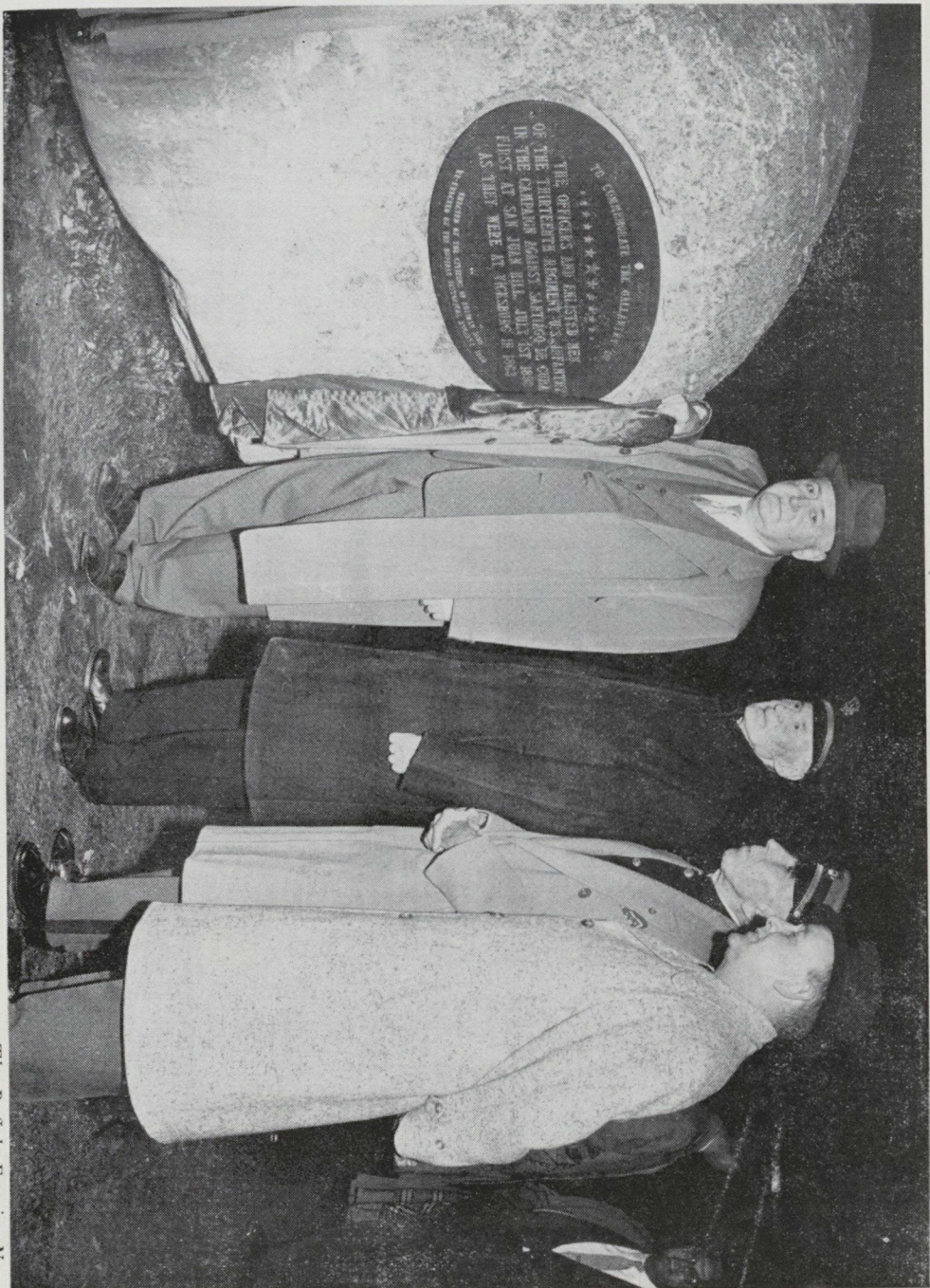
One of the most interesting actions which the Board has recently taken implements its desire concretely to interpret the appreciation of the citizens of Buffalo (or at least an important segment thereof) for their fellow-citizens who have made our community a better place to live in. The debt in which they have placed us is hard to express. But it is surely worth while to try. The form which our attempt annually takes may seem a bit curious; it is unconventional and peculiar to Buffalo.

I have here a replica of the medal presented to Sa-go-ye-wat-ha (better known to all of us, no doubt, as Red Jacket) by President Washington in 1792. It stands for an event of far more than local significance. It recalls the first organized attempt of the United States government to improve the condition of the Indian. Although many treaties had been signed, although some cash payments for Indian

land had been made, there still remained, on the part of the New York tribes, much distrust of their white neighbors. At the close of a council held in Painted Post in 1791, the Indian commissioner, Colonel Timothy Pickering, gave them good advice, centering it on the importance of using more modern methods of tilling the soil. A formal invitation was given them to visit Philadelphia the following year and confer with the white man's Great Chief. And so forty-seven men of the Six Nations gathered in the nation's capital, not to sign a treaty but merely to receive courtesies and have their ego extended. White chief and Indian chief smoked the pipe of peace (that too is in our museum), and the President gave Red Jacket a silver medal quite devoid of artistic merit but beautifully symbolical of the importance of the occasion, for the two are depicted with the pipe of peace between them, and behind them are cattle and implements of agriculture.

Because of its historical importance this medal has been chosen as a token of the Society's gratitude to the benefactors of the community. Annually a replica of this quaint medal is awarded to a person who the Society considers has been distinguished for some civic achievement or service. It need not fall into any one category, for civic service takes many forms. No city is great unless it rests the eye, feeds the intellect, and leads its people out of the bondage of the commonplace. For this, leadership and inspiration are necessary. Those who furnish this deserve our appreciation in tangible form.

You will have guessed who one of these persons is as soon as you entered the building this evening. With very little trouble we have been able to secure from individuals and museums a loan of fourteen paintings by Mr. Burchfield, and if only we could have found room we are sure that we could have secured many more. To the lenders we express our great gratitude. Not a single request was denied. I



The Buffalo Evening News

The Thirtieth Regiment Memorial in its new setting. President Park and two veterans with Owen B. Augspurger at the rededication November 11, 1958 before the Historical Society building.



A portrait of the youthful Fillmore by the famous American painter Thomas Sully (1783-1872). Now in the Witte Museum, San Antonio, Texas.

[Seventy-two]



Joseph Ellicott. An oil portrait by Fred G. Quimby, recently presented to the Buffalo Historical Society by the Bartlett Estate.

[Seventy-three]



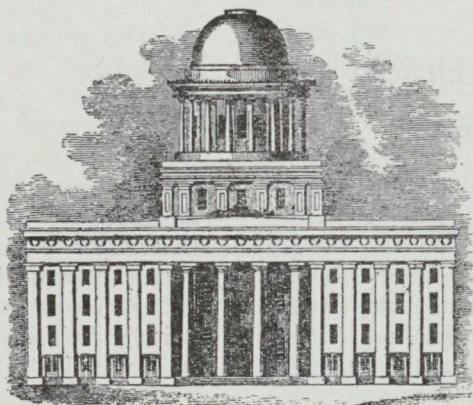
Charles Burchfield, winner of the Red Jacket Medal, with some of his works.

submit that this in itself is a tribute to the place which he holds in the hearts and minds of collectors and connoisseurs as well as his fellow-artists. The limitation imposed by the character of the exhibition is evident; each picture depicts the local scene. None here are foreign; nearly all are very familiar to all of you. Obviously this gives the exhibition a uniquely "homey" quality that in itself justifies its location in a building devoted to civic expression.

In our time, confusion is reigning (perhaps raging would be a better word) over the meaning of modern art. So many artists are losing contact with reality, shifting into the realm of fantasy and the subconscious, employing abstract signs and symbols that have to many of us little or no power of communication. The stress of color, line and space relationship threatens to make art purely decorative; human values seem to be lost in a fever of experimenting. There is no doubt about the meaning of Mr. Burchfield's paintings of Buffalo. There is a realism about them which yet furnishes us with a nostalgic quality that has a romantic touch. These shabby houses, dirty streets, steaming railroad yards, do they convey beauty? Beauty

is in the eyes of the beholder. How relevant to Mr. Burchfield's work and ideas is that famous line "Beauty is truth, truth beauty: that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

Let no one say, beholding these, that Buffalo has no place for the imaginative creator of ordinary things, close to the life of every one of us. A painting, more perhaps than other forms of expression, is a projection of the personality of the man who created it. Simplicity, modesty, integrity, shine out from these paintings. Here Mr. Burchfield has lived for 38 years, indefatigable, self-effacing. He who enriches the cultural life of the community unwittingly, and perhaps in his modesty unwillingly, memorializes himself. For all these years he has held true to the best canons of artistic taste, changing though they may have been. Charles Ephraim Burchfield has significantly and permanently added to our appreciation of both our artistic and our historical heritage, and the Buffalo Historical Society, acting as the agent and interpreter of all who love our city, gladly and gratefully awards to him its Red Jacket Medal.



An Informal Response

by Charles Burchfield

The following letter was sent by Mr. Burchfield to the Director casually as a part of their exchanges in arranging the event of the exhibition of paintings. It is so vital a statement of one of the forces behind his art that we have persuaded him to allow us to print it as it was written.

EVER since last Tuesday, I've been trying to get off a letter to you, but never was quite up to it. I think the low point in this present "bout" came on Wednesday. I am on a slow upward trend now, and I hope before too long to at least get out to the studio for a little work.

I want to thank you for your letter and the catalogues. I think you made excellent use of the drawing, and I like the color especially: it has a sunny August look. And I also want to express my appreciation of the citation to go with the medal. My wife and I both felt a happy glow over it. (By the way, I did enjoy Charles Brady's poem "To Build A City" throughout, and to pretend I was not very pleased over his tribute to my work would be very hypocritical indeed!)

We regret so much we could not come to the ceremonies. My daughters described to us all that took place and they en-

joyed it so much.

My daughter brought the plaque over to me early the next morning, and it is hanging on the wall opposite my chair where I can always see it. It will always remind me of the honor my fellow citizens (the Historical Society) have paid to me; and it has brightened what has been a rather discouraging period for us.

Thinking again of Brady's poem, there are quite a few people in Buffalo who do not appreciate their city and are wont to disparage it. Personally I love Buffalo and the whole western New York area adjacent passionately — I don't care if it's perfect or not — we don't cast away friends for their faults do we? So many people think I should move out west for my health, but I said I'd rather die of asthma in a place I love, than die of homesickness in a strange place. I'll admit that sounds a bit silly — I don't expect to die of asthma here. But I've been out west, and while it is fascinating to see, for constant living I want our end of New York State. Practically "chair-bound" for the past few weeks, I have watched from my window the pageant of autumn, it is still going on, and I wouldn't miss our changing seasons for anything.

Charles E. Burchfield

by Gordon M. Smith

IT is always, I feel, rather presumptuous to speak about the art of any artist, particularly a living artist such as Charles Burchfield. This is especially true this evening, when an exhibition of his work is on view here in the Historical Society building. The paintings, naturally, speak for themselves. I must say, however, that it is easier to speak about the art of Burchfield than that of most artists, not

only because I am personally very enthusiastic about it, but also because Mr. Burchfield, one of America's most distinguished artists, is also a very talented writer. We shall, therefore, call upon his writings from time to time for comments on his work.

The whole question of the artist versus nature is an enormous one. How does he respond to it? A mere transcription of

what he sees would not be art at all. In the case of Burchfield, we have a very definite and clear statement of his credo when he writes: "The artist must come to nature, not with a ready-made formula, but in humble reverence to learn. The work of an artist is superior to the surface appearance of nature, but not to its basic laws."

Throughout the history of art we find each artist responding to nature in his own way.

The American artist came to grips with nature early in the 19th century, in the person of Thomas Cole, our first important landscape painter, who established the tradition of romantic realism in this country. Born in England, Cole was vastly impressed by the scenery of America. However, he scorned the ordinary, choosing rather to penetrate the forest wilderness of the Catskills, or to climb the precipitous mountainsides of New Hampshire to reach his goal, where from exalted heights he could drink in a landscape of the utmost grandeur. Or again, he would make the arduous journey across New York State to paint the magnificence of Niagara Falls.

There were many others like Cole in the Hudson River School, who could be moved only by what might be called the sublime in nature, and fifty years later, even Winslow Homer, who in his early years had painted the most everyday of subjects, finally found his true love, his most inspiring challenge, in the thundering waves of stormy Atlantic seas. Albert Bierstadt sought the grandiose in the Rocky Mountains; Frederick C. Church in the Andes; and Whistler, their contemporary, found America too commonplace to paint at all and went to France, and later to England. It is highly doubtful whether any of these men, except the youthful Homer, would have considered seriously the possibility that there might be beauty in their own backyards.

There were on the other hand, in the next generation such landscapists as Twachtman, Maurice Prendergast, Glacens, and Childe Hassam, who while they painted everyday scenes, had all studied in Paris and were deeply influenced by French Impressionist techniques and tried to invest all they saw with beauty. "Painting American" as George Bellows referred to it, came into being in the first decade of this century, and it is in his own landscapes and cityscapes and those of John Sloan, another member of the group called "the Eight," that the American scene came into its own.

John Sloan set forth his credo, the very antithesis of Cole's, when he wrote: "The real artist finds beauty in common things. When what you see in nature is obviously beautiful, a picture postcard sunset — then is the time not to paint. Paint what you know and what you think. Keep your mind on such homely things, such deep-seated truths of reality, that there is no room for the superficial." Nowadays it is too often forgotten that when these first paintings of the so-called Ash Can School appeared in New York — these pictures of rooftops, of elevateds, of fire escapes, of alleys, of backyards and the teeming life of the city — they were extremely revolutionary, quite as revolutionary in their way as was abstract art in its beginnings.

Not only did they glorify the commonplace, but even the ugly. Beauty, aristocracy and wealth went hand in hand, and just so with ugliness were apt to be associated the ordinary people and poverty. Yet, in spite of the acknowledged realism of these painters, there is no question but that they regarded the city through romantic eyes — its life had quite as much fascination for them as a glowing sunset had for Cole.

The preoccupation of artists with the American scene continued into a second generation, and while such painters as Marin, Hartley, Weber and Stuart Davis, went to Paris to learn about the new

modern movements, Charles Burchfield remained in America to paint the country he knew, and to become one of the most important interpreters of American urban and rural life of his time. The fact that Burchfield did not go to Europe in his formative years (in fact he has never yet been there), and studied for only one brief day in a New York art school, seems to have had considerable bearing on his development as an artist. He grew up practically uninfluenced, although he was introduced as a student to Oriental art, which he has always admired. Other favorites he himself mentioned including Breughel, Courbet; the English 19th century romantic, Samuel Palmer; Constable; and the contemporary mystic, Morris Graves.

The major part of Burchfield's life has been spent in small towns, with the exception of four years each in Cleveland where he attended art school, and in Buffalo where he worked as a wallpaper designer. Born in 1893 in Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio, he moved five years later to Salem, Ohio, where he attended public school and high school, working week ends in a drug-store, later in the mailing department and as an accountant for a metal fabricating plant. In 1921 he came to Buffalo, later moving to Gardenville, where he has lived ever since. Burchfield's work is generally divided into three distinct periods, the early years in Salem, 1916-1921; the Buffalo period from 1921 to 1943 and the present phase, which began in the latter year.

Let us consider first the works of the middle period, the years when Burchfield was painting his familiar cityscapes of Buffalo, and countryscapes of the surrounding area. No other artist has recorded more capably or more brilliantly the drabness, the prosaicness, even the ugliness of an American city during the twenties and thirties. For as Burchfield said, "I thought it is not what a place is that makes for art — it is what the artist

feels about it." And Burchfield found beauty in Buffalo, not in the lofty arching trees and spacious parks of which the city is justly proud (Is not every newcomer to Buffalo asked first: "what do you think of our trees?"), but rather in the railroad yards, the grain elevators, the bridges, along the docks, in the markets, on the shabby, shoddy side streets, subjects that before Burchfield, no artist had found worth painting. One cannot help but think of John Constable, who wrote: "I have never seen an ugly thing in my life."

These are the most realistic paintings of Burchfield's career, yet one cannot dismiss them as literal realism, for Burchfield painted not merely the face of Buffalo but its very heart. He wrote: "My experience is, that it is impossible to paint a subject from the inside out, unless you have known it for years, lived in it, and alternately loved and hated it." No one better than Burchfield has caught the mood of a dismal late winter day in Buffalo, the dirty snow melting in the streets, the tired icicles on the roofs about to succumb to the onslaught of spring suns, the woebegone leafless trees, the leaden sky; or a rainy night with the lights of an isolated bar-room window mirrored in the streaming blackness of the street, the bulk of massive Victorian buildings rising frightening in the night.

Burchfield has always been a lover of mystery — the word occurs again and again in his writings about his own work — and he is able to create a haunting mysterious mood, to leave unsaid what might have been said, and thus leave it to the viewer to seek the answer. One wonders what goes on behind the windows of his mysterious Gothic houses, behind the false fronts of his Victorian mansions, or what lurks in the deep shadows of his verandas. If this be realism, it is certainly realism of the most romantic kind, for in realism pure and simple, one does not find it necessary to wonder — there is no shadow of a doubt. Burchfield refers to

himself as a romantic realist. He has written: "It seems to me that through all my work there has been the romantic trend, more obvious perhaps in the early years, but never lost sight of."

While Burchfield is often thought of as primarily a painter of the city and the industrial scene, and one of the greatest of these, which he was in every sense of the word, he himself refers to this period as "a digression," which became, in his eyes, *too* realistic. Thus to find the true Burchfield one must go back to the years 1916 to 1918, when as a young man just graduated from art school, he was creating some of the most original and delightful works of art of his time. A true child of nature, he found no aspect of it too commonplace for his brush.

The flowers of the field, the seedpods, the grasses, the trees, the snow, the clouds, the sun, the rain, each of these he invested with a life of its own. His houses have eyes, his flowers faces; the wind, the sun and the rain are not merely manifestations of nature, but living forces. In a wintry sky the clouds are fierce monsters, on a June morning they fairly dance with joy. One thinks of Burchfield as a realist, and realists paint what they see. How then could he paint the sound of the church bells ringing, or the song of the katydids, or the cricket chorus, or the night wind? One answer might be that Burchfield went far beyond realism in these fantasies. In many cases, he made use of symbols. In fact, he had his own vocabulary in a notebook called "Conventions for Abstract Thoughts." Here he put down symbols to represent different moods and sounds, some of which he incorporated in his paintings. Long before the age of realism, the medieval artists had invented his own symbols for nature — and the Oriental artist since time immemorial has employed special conventions to represent every phase of landscape.

The noted critic, James Thrall Soby has said of these early water colors,

"Nothing in recent American art seems more directly wrenched out of inner experience, nothing more acutely felt or passionately stated, more original and truly creative." Far from painting simply what he saw Burchfield was painting moods and sounds, music and emotions — intangibles all — and what could be more modern than painting intangibles? One of the most interesting examples of this is a painting of 1920 called "The Thunderclap." How would one go about painting a thunderclap since no one has ever seen one? It must necessarily be done by abstract means. And that was how Burchfield did it. His strange, tortured cloud formations are like nothing we have ever seen in nature. Their closest relatives seem to be the Chinese scroll paintings of dragons. Yet they achieved well what the artist was trying to create, in his words: "An elemental world fashioned from the very reverberations from the booming thunder."

Burchfield was destined to move on from his Buffalo period to a third phase of his work, one which might be called the culmination of his career, since it combines the spirit of the early highly emotional water colors with a form and solidity learned over a period of 25 years or more. In 1943 Burchfield gave up the industrial subject completely, returning to his early work for inspiration, in fact in many cases he has actually enlarged these small paintings. These most recent works, however, have a maturity and strength, an elemental and monumental character far beyond any of his earlier efforts. Again and again he seeks to recall an emotion experienced years before but brought into focus sharply by the passage of years.

He is painting again the simple, commonplace subjects — the wind, the clouds, the sunshine — yet with an intensity so passionate that one cannot help but think of the method of working of the abstract expressionists of today. Burchfield's own words express this more eloquently than

[Seventy-nine]

could any other description. Of the painting "Oncoming Spring" of 1954, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Olmsted, he wrote: "Hardly had I set up my easel when a thunderstorm came up. I decided nothing was going to disturb my painting and hurriedly got my huge beach umbrella and my raincoat. I protected my legs with a portfolio, the wind holding it in place. And so I painted with my nose almost on the paper with thunder crashing, boughs breaking and rain falling in torrents. A glorious few hours when I seemed to become part of the elements. When I was done at late afternoon the picture was complete. *It seemed as if it had materialized under its own power.*"

One of the most distinctive features of Burchfield's art is his fascination with the ever-changing weather, the seasons, even the time of day. Going over the titles of his paintings, we find that he has painted almost every month of the year, for example: "February Thaw," "March Sunlight," "Snow in April," "In May"; and seasons, "Glory of Spring," "Winter Sunshine"; and times of day "High Noon," "Six O'Clock," "Sunday Morning at Eleven O'Clock." He writes: "I would like a painting of mine, if done in mid-July, to express mid-July," and "I love the approach of winter, the retreat of winter, the change from snow to rain and vice versa, the decay of vegetation and the resurgence of plant life in the spring. These to me are exciting and beautiful, an endless panorama of beauty and drama."

These are surely the commonplace things of the world, the things that are with us always. Yet, through his own vision and his own intense response to nature, Burchfield has helped us to see them more clearly, or perhaps to see them for the first time. In any case, he has written one of the most poetic chapters in the annals of American art, not only in his paintings, but also in his writings, which so vividly describe the emotions that brought forth his works.

[Eighty]

I will close with one of the most eloquent of these, written about the Albright Art Gallery's "Sun and Rocks": "An attempt to depict a scene in primeval times, in early spring, when conflicting forces of nature hold sway and seem to fill the earth with violence and chaos. A great cliff, shaggy with ferns, juts up into the sky; from it, forced loose by the relentless process of erosion, huge boulders have tumbled down the hillside. Among them, hemlocks torn and twisted by the violence of the wind and storm have managed somehow to sustain life; here and there also, a few wild ginger plants have ventured forth. Shining from the deep blue cavernous sky, the spring sun — our great daytime star — floods the scene with brilliant light and will heal the wounds of the earth and bring forth new life."

I have purposely omitted mentioning the many honors and awards that Burchfield has received throughout his career. For I feel that his importance can best be realized by examining his own art. To sum up in one sentence its significance — he has always been a truly creative artist in the fullest sense of the word. Never a follower, he has always been a leader, and from his middle period stemmed a whole school of so-called regional painting. Burchfield may be said to occupy a unique position in the history of American painting — and what higher praise can one give to any artist?



Annual Report of the Director

THE Buffalo Historical Society may now claim to have a complete basic program in its field. By adding, thanks to an increase of our County appropriation, a Chief of Research in Lester Smith to supervise the manuscript collection and set up collecting policies in all research materials, we have closed the last gap. We are doing effective museum work in and out of our building; we are offering study services to the schools; an increasing group of researchers are using our facilities; we are publishing as we can the results of such work as the forthcoming biography of Fillmore; through our Congress of local Historical Societies and the federation of Erie County societies we are encouraging our sister institutions in the field; and we do what we can in newspapers and by television to make a broader public aware of what may be achieved by an understanding of our own history.

In the past our predecessors had to do more choosing among these desirable activities, for we are now fortunate in sharing the nation's growing prosperity to the extent of employing a staff of seven whose duties are largely professional—I write "largely" because none of us is entirely exempt from draft calls to watch floors on occasion. Conversely, some of the seven whose duties are principally to keep us physically in order are able to steal time to assist in advancing the cause of history. So we are divided about half and half between contributing to historical enlightenment and preventing dirt and disorder from overwhelming us. We therefore report gratefully of real progress achieved and hopefully that we may be able to make the most of our new opportunities.

We still conceive our duty to be to meet the challenge of social disintegration. Society is not a material thing subject to microscopic examination and to be re-

paired with the latest plastics; it is a state of mind, a condition of the emotions. The loyal citizen is one ready to work and sacrifice for the organized groups whose common activities protect and support us all; he is ready to work and sacrifice because he realizes what it is that makes his city and country great. It is our job to make possible that realization.

Are we doing enough by gathering newspapers, printed books and pamphlets, and a few manuscripts, by saving a sample of the goods by which we live and the machinery that produces them, by interpreting and displaying these relics, by our modest publications, and by assisting our teachers? How much is going to be enough in the face of threats that war may totally demolish many such cities as ours, or in the light of faint-hearted fears of human extinction? What will be enough to convince the hundreds of millions of the world's neutral people that we live by the principles of justice in orderly, hard-working communities?

The historical societies and other agencies of this nation now number many hundreds, ranging in size from a few determined people in village groups to the state giants whose budgets run into hundreds of thousands of dollars. Among them are many answers to the question as to what their duties may be. Some cities have chosen to issue multi-volume learned histories based on minute research by such scholars as Blake McKelvey of Rochester. Others methodically encourage amateur collecting and writing toward the time that a literary man will exploit the results to write the finished story. Nearly all collect museum relics. Fewer collect books and manuscripts, but the cities of Chicago and Detroit have special libraries or departments of libraries that do little else. Others act through local college libraries.

It is rare that a society does not finally break into the museum field with a re-

[Eighty-one]

stored house, or showrooms in the basement of city hall, an astonishing number of full scale museums, and many that set up their displays in downtown store windows. Some have travelling units in buses, trucks, or trailers. But they all succeed in advertising their respect for our heritage.

Almost every historical outfit now works with the schools to take the local story to those who are going to live by it. Many print magazines for juniors, nearly all of us sponsor meetings for them. Some publish extensive series of text and reference books for the schools, throwing in slides, filmstrips, movies, traveling exhibits, and do-it-yourself museum kits for the school-room.

Montana Historical Society launched a popular magazine that returns a revenue large enough to support other society activities. Only the extraordinary economics of periodical publishing interposed to stop their achieving national circulation on the newsstands. I can't resist recalling that it was the American Association for State and Local History, through the remarkable work of Earl Newton and S. K. Stevens, both now of the Pennsylvania State Historical Commission, that made *American Heritage* into a successful magazine; it was Mary Cunningham of the New York State Historical Association who originated it.

We hear of folk art collections; collections of special research materials such as labor history, industrial history, agricultural history, the story of mass communications, medical, legal, military, marine, railroad, Civil War, educational, immigrant and postal history. The archivists have made a start in teaching both business people and bureaucrats how to preserve their story as well as to live with a threatening mass of paper.

National and state park services have taken up history. To everyone's astonishment the attendance at historical sites is building up faster than at the scenic parks

and history is being taken seriously in such agencies.

What shall we do with the Buffalo Historical Society? We shall have to do some choosing, too. We can't adopt all of the activities that have been thought somewhere to have civic use. We aren't even going to be able to stand as we are very long; for example, if we started to advertise our manuscript holdings widely among scholars we would very likely be so busy taking care of the requests for service that we could not undertake to seek out, acquire, and catalog the fresh groups of manuscripts that will be needed for the future historian. We may soon be reduced to taking materials only with the proviso that we will do no more than preserve them, since we cannot assign staff time to prepare, arrange, and catalog them. Others have been in this position before us.

In spite of a relentlessly active staff and very considerable member assistance there are things we would very much like to do at a much increased pace. There are a number of notably unsatisfactory areas in the museum for which we need new cases as well as careful, well-documented re-display plans. We appreciate the public interest that, according to an incomplete but conservative count, brought upward of 70,000 visitors to the museum, in the past twelve months, but we cannot let exhibits deteriorate from age even if we could learn to tolerate obsolescence of style. We have still much cataloging to do in the museum and in the research collections; it is under control and most of the work is of clerical nature, but it must be done.

We need to encourage the collection of material for governmental, business, and school history throughout the county. There are institutions doing well at preserving records, and others who are callously destroying every record, useful or not. We would like to do much more to provide material for research to be done under the direction of the three — now

four with the development of State University College — graduate faculties in this area. (Once upon a time we collected manuscripts with no colleges anywhere about.) We have started, through the agency of the Erie County Fair Board, an agricultural museum at the Fair; 50,000 people saw it this summer. It must be developed, and we would like to be able to work a little more toward planning a transportation museum that is so logical an institution for Buffalo. The Mark Twain house calls for active interest. (A word to the wise: the Detroit Historical Museum put a restored house into their local fair, where over 100,000 visit it annually.)

Is it unreasonable that we think of doubling our school attendance by finding a way to bring the pupils of private and parochial schools to the museum? Or that we dream of finding the resources to send out mobile units or collections of materials for school use? Or that we think that it is time to aid in the work of rescuing archeological sites now being destroyed at an unprecedented rate? Within the museum we want to get up a room of folk art and build a map, animated by lights, to set off our exhibits on the French and British periods of our history. We have an idea for solving the old museum conundrum of how to interest the public at large in the specialized collections of china and other lines made by the initiated while at the same time maintaining large selections open for inspection by the student of the subject. Perhaps somehow we can try the idea out.

You see from this that there is no lack of things to do, and the recital ignores the most sensitive area of all: the joint activities with our members and other public groups that keep us working along lines profitable to this locality and that give us the real basis for successful public representation of our objectives.

My object, nevertheless, and candidly, is to point out as clearly as I know how

that there are many ways to discharge our civic duty to combat the tendencies toward social disintegration that are found among us as in every human society. Your responsibility is to support our efforts to find the resources to take up these tasks so far as you approve them. The only reason for my talking to you is to win that approval.

How much you will decide should be done will no doubt depend upon your judgment as to how acute our need is. Buffalo does have great need of the sort of history that will make its people fully aware of the thoughts and deeds that have made it a great city. We lack proper pride in what has been done here, and nothing better illustrates the point than the disgraceful but now triumphant episode of the Thirteenth Regiment marker.

As I stood in the rain last month and watched the John W. Cowper Company's efficient crew uncover the boulder placed in Front Park to commemorate an army unit that left here to go to war I could not resist a feeling of incredulity. It seemed impossible that the struggle of over two and one-half years was at last at an end. Further, it seemed impossible that there could have been a struggle over the restoration of such a memorial, or, worse and worse, that it should have been indifferently shoveled under — at a considerable cost — when a dozen inexpensive expedients would have preserved it. It had been bought by popular subscription, the boulder chosen for its mystical Indian associations, and inscribed as recognition of the services of a military unit that is now still in foreign service. What could have motivated its destruction?

I have not sought to write the history of this ignominious act, but I will record that one functionary close to the planning body of the Parks Department remarked to me that he couldn't see why anyone wanted to preserve it. This gross, purblind, and unfeeling obtuseness is what we must combat. I hope that the determined

[*Eighty-three*]

stand of this Society against this destructive impulse — so much more to be lamented than mere juvenile delinquency — will tend to check it.

We have not won the battle. The juvenile gnawings on the trappings of the locomotive that stands in La Salle Park have now been seconded by official determination to scrap it utterly. Here is a piece already an antique, a historical relic that obviously in a century will hold the keenest interest as the leading symbol of a great age. The declared interest of this Society has been totally disregarded, as that of the Railway Historical Society and other responsible groups. To preserve something for Buffalo is too much trouble for our system of civic administration. Irresponsibility among civil servants is compounded by the accumulated burdens of years of neglect that bear heavily upon our present capable and conscientious Mayor and Commissioner of Parks. They are not sufficiently supported by an alert citizenry.

The truth is that we are being unwittingly misled by our party leaders. They appear to be so anxious to be presidents, or president-makers, or the friends of presidents, that they have scant patience for the needs of the city in which they live. The vision of the White House's faraway glamor dazzles them. But why should it? Two presidents have come from Buffalo, and the fact that they were good citizens of this place put them on the path to high office. Should we be so overpowered by the hope of another New York president as to neglect the practice of the virtues that make great presidents?

It is plainly upon a misconception of history that our present self-destructive mood is based. Perhaps the mood will pass if the record is set straight. That is our business.

Respectfully submitted,

WILBUR H. GLOVER

Report of the Members Advisory Committee

PARTICIPATION on the Members Advisory Committee during the past season has been somewhat like being in uniform with the Los Angeles Dodgers. Our roster showed many ups and downs: old and valued teammates retired, new and untried faces joined up. We wrestled mightily with such "front office" problems as Committee policy, co-ordination of effort with the Board of Managers, planning of future museum activities.

We like to feel that through it all we maintained a "fighting team". We boosted committee membership from a half dozen to seventeen. Of this number we note with pride and pleasure that seven are from the distaff side, the presence of the ladies contributing immeasurably to the accomplishments of the Committee.

[*Eighty-four*]

Our projects were many and various. We conducted a careful examination, extending over two meetings, of the museum building with a view to suggesting to the Board of Managers certain alterations or improvements which we felt might improve service to the public or the membership. We considered such matters as the advisability of an archeological program, the establishment of a public relations body. . . . A pet project throughout the year was the consideration of this Annual Meeting and the form it might take. I note, in looking over the minutes of our meetings, that some phase of this evening's conclave was considered at each session we held: the catering, seating arrangements, and so on. We hope you are pleased with the back-to-the-earth movement. We

do not say we deserve the credit for this fine program; but we did record ourselves vociferously in favor of it.

Throughout the year we were aided immeasurably in our deliberations by the presence at our meetings of Board members and members of the staff. Dr. Park has been steadfast in attendance, Dr. Swift also. Dr. Glover and Mr. Hopkins have been equally faithful. Without their help and co-operation the Committee would have accomplished little. We were assured by their presence of close and sym-

pathetic liaison with the Board of Managers and the staff.

So the Members Advisory Committee is proving itself to the Board of Managers and to the staff. It, perhaps, remains to prove itself to the membership. Given time, this group of capable, conscientious, dedicated members cannot but reflect credit upon the Buffalo Historical Society.

Respectfully submitted,

WALTER S. MERWIN, *Chairman*

Report of the Committee on Markers

THE first meeting of this committee, which was held February 23, 1956 with eight members present, was devoted to drawing up a tentative list of sites on the Niagara Frontier worth marking. It was decided to concentrate on Delaware Avenue as a beginning, as a result of which the Milburn House, where McKinley died, the Mark Twain house, and the Forest Lawn Cemetery, where rest many early Buffalo settlers, have been marked, and permission to mark City Hall as the site of the Samuel Wilkeson residence has been procured. The *Courier-Express* agreed to pay the cost of the Mark Twain marker, and the Cemetery Association paid for the two markers set up at the Forest Lawn entrance.

The Committee has been pleased by the ready public interest in this project, which brought proposals from other groups. The Society has therefore joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in marking the site of the first church building in Buffalo, now the site of the Masonic Temple on Niagara Street. The Salisbury Club proposed the marking of the Harris Hill Tavern, where the *Buffalo Gazette* was printed during the War of 1812, and this has been done. The most recent joint venture was the marking of the site of the Quaker Mission established by Jacob Taylor short-

ly after 1800. The cost was borne by his descendants and the locale, although now temporarily obscured because of impending roadbuilding operations, is the Taylor Hollow road a short distance north of Gowanda.

Four others are ready to be set up in the near future: the Black Rock site at Niagara Street and Busti Avenue, sponsored by the Black Rock Manufacturers Association; Grover Cleveland's office, now the site of the Manufacturers and Traders Trust Company, and sponsored by the Company; Shelton Square, sponsored by St. Paul's Cathedral; and one to be placed on the Western Savings Bank building at Main and Court Street to signify it as the oldest bank building in Buffalo still in use as a bank.

In preparation are markers or the following sites: Palmer's Tavern, the first in Buffalo; the Pierce-Arrow plant on Elmwood Avenue; and the Thomas Industrial Center, where the famous Thomas Flyer was made. Mr. William Palmer of the Committee is sponsoring the first, and the Buffalo Automobile Dealers Association the other two.

The fact that the Committee has been very active may lead one to conclude that erecting markers is a simple task. This is not so. When erected on private prop-

[*Eighty-five*]

erty, permission from the owners must be obtained in addition to finding a sponsor and doing the verifying research. When one is to be erected on city property, in addition to securing a sponsor a complicated process of securing official permission is demanded. This means referring complete plans to the City Council through the City Clerk's office. From the Council it goes to the Planning Commission, and then, if it is near a street, to the Traffic Board. Successive approvals, which are not usually withheld, bring the measure back to the Clerk's office, where it resides until phone calls or inquiries in person bring it to light. After this it is only a matter of digging, setting a post in concrete, and bolting on the marker—and arranging appropriate observances.

Although the prime purpose of the Committee has been the erection of memorials, it has not shied away from replacing those that may have been removed for one reason or another. One such is the tablet marking the St. John house, on Main Street between Court and Mohawk, one of the three not destroyed by the British in the burning of 1813. By consent of the Neisner Brothers Company, it will be soon placed on its store front.

Another restoration project is the well advertised effort to restore the great boulder

and plaque erected to commemorate the Thirteenth Regiment. Now on our front lawn, it is scheduled shortly to be supplied with a new plaque. It was resurrected by the Committee after a two-and-one-half year tug-of-war in which we attempted to convince the City Fathers that the Parks Department was in error in burying it. Although at times it was a discouraging fight, the Committee is acutely grateful for its occurrence, for it learned much concerning the subterranean channels and wily subterfuges of our City Hall. Next time a memorial is buried it will not take two and a half years to recover it.

We are deeply indebted to the President of the John W. Cowper Company, Mr. Daniel Niederlander, who is a member of the Board of Managers of this Society, for digging out the boulder and transporting it to its present location without cost to the Society.

I must also report that a few weeks ago I discovered that the Mark Twain marker had been wrenched from its standard. The Buffalo Police Department responded to the report with a search that quickly restored it to us. Now being refurbished, it will soon be ready to be replaced.

Respectfully submitted,
I. FRANK MOGAVERO, *Chairman*

REPORT OF THE 97th ANNUAL MEETING

The business meeting was called to order by President Julian Park at 8:50 p.m., October 14, 1958.

Reports were presented by President Park, by the Director, W. H. Glover, by the Chairman of the Members Advisory Committee, Walter S. Merwin, and by Robert B. Meech, for the Chairman of the Markers Committee, Dr. I. Frank Mogavero.

The Nominating Committee, Dr. George Staniland, Chairman, George F. Phillips, and John G. Wickser, proposed the following for membership on the Board of

Managers for terms expiring 1962: Julian Park, Daniel B. Niederlander, Leonard R. Lipowicz, Robert B. Meech, and Walter S. Merwin. They were unanimously elected.

The Red Jacket Medal for civic service was presented to Charles Burchfield. In his absence it was received by his daughter, Mrs. Henry Richter.

A paper on Burchfield's art by Gordon M. Smith was read by Mrs. Smith in his absence.

Adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Excerpts from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Managers

The meeting was called to order by President Park at 4:00 p.m. October 16, 1958.

Dr. Staniland reported for the nominating committee. He recommended that the following be added to the present Board *ex officio* to represent the County:

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors
(John K. Turnbull)

Chairman of the Finance Committee
(Foster Turnbull)

Comptroller (Jacob Tick)

Treasurer of the Fair Board
(George G. Sipprell)

This was unanimously agreed to.

For officers, the incumbents were re-nominated: Julian Park, President; Charles Cary, Vice-President; Owen B. Augspurger, Secretary; Robert L. Wilson, Treasurer. On motion of Dr. Swift, seconded by Mr. Macleod, the nominees were unanimously re-elected.

The following resolution was presented by the Director, and unanimously agreed to:

WHEREAS, The John W. Cowper Company, Incorporated, volunteered its services to dig up and transport to the grounds of The Buffalo Historical Society the boulder in Front Park that had been the memorial to the Thirteenth Regiment of the United States Infantry, and

WHEREAS, The Company performed the task with dispatch, overcoming many difficulties attending it, and incurring considerable expense to procure equipment as well as to maintain the machines and men needed, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the John W. Cowper Company receive the thanks of the Board of Managers for its generosity, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Company be elected a Patron Member of the Society.

Respectfully submitted,

OWEN B. AUGSPURGER, *Secretary*

Members Added in 1958

LIFE

BISHOP JOSEPH A. BURKE
HAZARD K. CAMPBELL
CHARLES COOGAN CARY
GEORGE GORDON CARY
THOMAS CUTTING CARY
TRUMBULL CARY
DONALD A. HEUSSLER
MRS. DONALD A. HEUSSLER
NORTHRUP R. KNOX
NORMAN E. MACK, II
MRS. HARRIS N. SNYDER
HENRY Z. URBAN
CHARLES J. WICK
C. R. WYCKOFF, JR.

SUSTAINING

STEWART H. LATHAN
WELDON D. SMITH

ANNUAL

CHARLES G. BLAINE*
DOUGLASS CAMPBELL
G. I. HEFFERNAN
JUNIOR LEAGUE OF BUFFALO, INC.
LEON J. LEAHY, M.D.
MRS. P. S. PARK
D. S. SCOTT
WILLIAM SOBOTTA
HENRY C. F. STEWART
CORNING TOWNSEND, JR.

[Eighty-seven]

ASSOCIATE

HAROLD AHLSTROM*
MRS. IRVING A. BARRETT
ROLAND R. BENZOW
GORDON H. BURGESS
FRANK CZARNOCKI*
JOSEPH P. DESMOND
FRANK C. DIEM, JR.
WILLIAM H. DOWD
MISS ELEANOR R. DUSHANE
CHARLES F. HAMILTON
PAUL HORGAN
EDWARD H. JONES
JOHN T. MAHER*
MRS. MARGARET M. MOTT
CHARLES S. PIERCE
BRIG. GEN. BRAINARD PRESCOTT
JOHN M. PROPHET
DANIEL T. ROACH
LOUIS W. SMALL
MRS. JOHN A. SMITH
DR. ANNE VIELE
*and Marine Chapter

The Issue's Authors

GORDON MACKINTOSH SMITH is adequately known to us all, but it is pleasant to review the roads by which our close associates have arrived. One of the numerous graduates of Williams College (1929) who have risen to key positions in the museum world, Mr. Smith completed graduate study at Harvard and extensive travels in Europe in time to face the economic blizzard of the 1930's. He found an immediate place for his talents in becoming Assistant Regional Director for the New England Art Project, WPA, passing from that to military service during the war. Then followed the nine years of directing the Currier Art Gallery in Manchester, New Hampshire, which preceded his service as Director of the Albright Art Gallery (since 1956). He has distinguished himself for his capacity to work intensely and with great discrimination in his field while extending the popular reach of his institutions. We are glad to be able to present a sample of his accomplishments, which makes the above statements largely unnecessary.

FOR CHRISTMAS

A Large Variety of Fancy Gifts, Toys, Books, Maps, Old Prints, Flags, Games, Puzzles, Model Kits, Ceramics, China, Toy Cannons, etc.

YANKEE APPLE PARERS & COFFEEMILLS

Young Ladies' Cast Iron Stoves and other Cast Iron Toys in the Quaintest Styles, Combination Banks, etc.

Authentic Hitchcock Decorated Furniture

Famous Historic Documents (reproduced) & Collectors' Books

Imported Lately from England — Penguin Books

BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mark Twain in Buffalo

by Martin B. Fried

THE reputation of Mark Twain has gone through three stages since his death in 1910. At first he was famous as a humorist, then as a satirist, and finally as a literary artist. The first stage was a mere reflection of the early Mark Twain, the author of "The Jumping Frog," the purveyor of inspired nonsense, linked in the public mind with Artemus Ward, Josh Billings, Petroleum Vesuvius Nasby, and Orpheus C. Kerr. Clemens recoiled with distaste from this side of his reputation, but he encouraged it by assuming the mask of Mark Twain on the lecture platform. The satirist and the literary artist were present in the clown, but it was the clown that the public recognized. It gradually dawned on the critics that Clemens was something different from the other humorists of his time. For a long while it was his likeness to Cervantes and Swift that impressed. Just as it was seen that Melville's *Moby Dick* was more than a sea story, so was it discovered that *Huckleberry Finn* was more than a boy's story, and that the humorist was something more than a humorist in *The Mysterious Stranger*, *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, and *Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven*. And finally, in very recent years, scholars in particular have created an image close to reality of a literary artist, a master of an original style, a genius with words, incomparable and unique.

This new image of Clemens, inspired by the discovery of his early writings by research scholars and Twainians, was the image of a careful writer learning his trade and working at it over a long period of time before he came to the public notice. *Innocents Abroad*, published in 1869, was not the opening gun of a campaign for public notice and esteem but the final shot of a long apprenticeship that began in Hannibal, Missouri, as early as 1852,

when Clemens was only seventeen. During this stage of his career he tried other occupations, but he continued writing. It is possible that he ended his apprenticeship when *Innocents Abroad* had such phenomenal success that he could finally see his way to devote the whole of his attention to the writing of books.

It was then that he gave up the editorship of the *Buffalo Express*, sold his house in Buffalo, and moved to Hartford, Connecticut, to settle down as a writer of books. His Buffalo experience, scanted in most biographies, has significance because it was the final stage in a long campaign for an artistic existence free of financial worries and of the burdens of journalistic writing.

Clemens came to Buffalo to assume his duties as editor of the *Buffalo Express* in August, 1869, just one year after he had begun his courtship of Miss Olivia Langdon of Elmira, the daughter of Jervis Langdon, wealthy coal dealer and capitalist. The two events, the assumption of the Buffalo editorship and the courtship of the Elmira heiress, were directly related. Clemens fell in love with Olivia, proposed marriage, was rejected, continued his suit, promised to change his ways, tried to convince the girl and her parents that he was really a serious and sober citizen, and was finally accepted, the engagement being announced on February 4, 1869, a little more than one year after Clemens had first met Miss Langdon in New York City on New Year's Day of 1868. Clemens understood that he was on probation. "They were not very much concerned about my past," he wrote to his sister on December 1, 1868, "but they simply demand that I shall prove my future before I take the sunshine out of their house."¹ To prove his future,

1. Dixon Wecter, *The Love Letters of Mark Twain*, 29.

Clemens agreed to settle in Buffalo.

It was an impulsive decision. Almost to the last moment there was no thought of Buffalo. To satisfy his future father-in-law that he was willing to settle down in a responsible position with a regular income, Clemens began a campaign in December, 1868, to buy a share in a reputable newspaper. On December 2nd he wrote to Mr. Langdon that he had spoken to John Russell Young, the managing editor of the New York *Tribune*, and had learned that "the price of *Tribune* shares is \$7,000. each, & none in the market just now. There are 100 shares, altogether, & a share yields \$1,000. a year — sometimes as high as \$2,000. He wants me to buy — told him I would take as many shares as I could mortgage my book for, and as many more as I could pay for with labor of hand & brain."²

He also actively negotiated for a place on the Cleveland *Herald*. Mrs. Fairbanks, wife of one of the owners, had "mothered" him on the *Quaker City* excursion in 1867, encouraged his courtship of Olivia Langdon, and urged him to move to Cleveland. On December 29th, 1868, Clemens wrote to Mr. Langdon, "I like the *Herald* as an anchorage for me, better than any paper in the Union — its location, its policies, present business & prospects, all are suitable. Fairbanks says the concern (with its lot & building) inventories \$212,000; its earnings were \$42,000 for the past year, which is a good percentage for such safe & lasting property as a newspaper. He owns half & the Benedicts the other half. He wants me in very much — wants me to buy an eighth from the Benedicts, so that control would rest with him when I gave my vote so — price about \$25,000. He says if I can get it he will be my security until I can pay for it all by the labor of my tongue & hands, & that I shall not be hurried. That suits me, just exactly. It couldn't be better. He says the salaries of

himself & the elder Benedict are \$3,000 — and mine would be \$3,000. Yet he would *hire* me and pay me more. I don't understand these things — it is a slim salary — & so I should *have* to make the paper make money, to save myself. However, I shall see Mr. Benedict & try to make the arrangement."³

The next day he wrote to Olivia as if Cleveland were a settled matter. "I think we'll live in Cleveland, Livy — & then we'll persuade Mr. Langdon to come & live in Euclid Avenue, so that we can have a place to go & get a *good* dinner occasionally when we have got so hungry we can't stand it any longer."⁴

During the month of January, 1869, he lectured some thirty times in the West. Invitations kept pouring in, and he saw himself as a "wanderer from necessity." He played with the idea of trying to get the post of Minister to China, saying that he liked it except that he wanted to settle down "in pursuit of my regular calling & to further my advancement in my legitimate profession."⁵ His regular calling and his legitimate profession at that moment in his career was journalism. He turned down the postmastership of San Francisco, offered to him at the time, because the place was worth only \$4,000 and was too confining to allow him much time to write for newspapers.

Meanwhile, he continued his courtship, mostly by mail. He hated having to lecture for a living and hoped to be able to give it up forever after this one tour. He worked on the book he had promised to produce for Elisha Bliss of the American Publishing Company of Hartford, and he continued to look for an editorial berth. In the spring of 1869 Redpath had a lecture tour in the West planned for him, but he gave it up, though he thought he needed the money, because he dreaded it, and

3. *Ibid.*, 39-40.

4. *Ibid.*, 63.

5. *Ibid.*, 60.

2. *Ibid.*, 31.

because Olivia asked him to. In April he toyed with the prospect of buying into the *Hartford Courant*. Petroleum V. Nasby, the very popular humorist, suggested he buy into the *Toledo Blade*. Charles Dudley Warner told him that he wished he could effect a copartnership with him but doubted the possibility of doing it. Editor of the *Courant*, Warner was not quite ready to accept Mark Twain. Another prospect, the *Hartford Post*, also disappeared because the owners did not wish to sell, and Clemens said that he was not anxious to buy "for the *Post* is not quite as desirable property in my eyes as it is in theirs."⁶

Then in July it appeared that one of the owners of the *Buffalo Express* was willing to dispose of his share in the newspaper for \$25,000. While Clemens had been thinking of Cleveland, New York, or Hartford, Mr. Langdon had been thinking of Buffalo. Buffalo was near Elmira, the Langdons had business connections in Buffalo, and Mr. Langdon had an agent, Mr. J. D. F. Slee, who could be counted on to take a personal interest in the young couple and to help them socially and otherwise. Mr. Langdon's credit was good in Buffalo, and he advanced \$12,500 to his future son-in-law to swing the deal. Clemens agreed enthusiastically to the proposition.

It is clear enough now that Clemens thought of the Buffalo editorship as the climax of his career. He had been a "jour" printer and a Mississippi River pilot and a hard-working newspaper reporter. He had been born and brought up in Missouri, had wandered throughout the country, had gone up and down the Mississippi River many times, had even traveled to the Sandwich Islands and to Europe. He had tried mining and soldiering for brief periods, unsuccessfully. He now looked forward to a career as editor and owner of a newspaper. Although he was just about ready to publish a full-length book

about his experiences in Europe, a book that was to be the best-selling travel book of all time, he could see no future in writing books. *Innocents Abroad* appeared on July 20, 1869, and three weeks later Clemens appeared in Buffalo to assume his duties with the *Express*.

The announcement of Clemens's purchase was revealed officially in an editorial in the *Express* on August 16th. "A partial change takes place today in the proprietorship and management of the *Express*," the editorial stated. "Mr. Samuel L. Clemens, better known to the reading world as 'Mark Twain,' having purchased the interest lately owned by Mr. Thomas A. Kennett, who leaves Buffalo to engage in another line of business in New York City. It is with the sincerest regret that the recent associates of Mr. Kennett dissolve their connection with him. No relations of business could be pleasanter, more entirely harmonious or more satisfactory in every way than those which have existed between them and him. Nor could they have labored in cooperation with anyone whose resources and abilities as a journalist they should have valued more highly. His withdrawal is a loss to the *Express*, which we should count serious if it occurred under almost any other circumstances than those which have brought it about. But Mr. Clemens, who takes the vacated place, is an acquisition, we need not say, upon which any newspaper could congratulate itself. As we speak now in advance of his occupation of the chair in which he will seat himself with us a few days hence, we can properly indulge these congratulations and confess the pride that we feel in identifying the celebrity of the name and the popularity of the writings of 'Mark Twain' with the *Express*. To the readers of the *Express* it will certainly be an agreeable announcement that they are hereafter to be regularly and familiarly in the enjoyment of the humor of the most purely humorous pen that is wielded in American journalism."

6. *Ibid.*, 101.

Some thirty years later Clemens remembered Kennett (he called him Kinney) with some asperity as the man who had sold him property worth \$15,000 for \$25,000. His recollection was that Kennett had gone about New York City boasting about his smartness. However, the evidence seems to show that Clemens went very carefully into the value of the property he purchased and at the time expressed his satisfaction with it. He may have had to sell out later at a loss simply because there were no purchasers available willing to buy at his price. Clemens's temperament could easily account for his outburst against Kennett. He made similar accusations against Elisha Bliss, who published *Innocents Abroad*, *Roughing It* and other books by Mark Twain, yet at the time these books were published Clemens expressed himself many times as satisfied with their arrangements. And he attacked his own nephew and business manager, Charles Webster, accusing him of mismanagement and stupidity, so that it required a whole book, *Mark Twain, Business Man*, by Webster's son, to prove that Clemens was completely wrong in this instance. He was very possibly mistaken in the other instances, too.

The new editor's opening remarks to his readers, entitled "Salutatory," were published in the *Express* on August 21, 1869. They were polite and humorous, including the classic Twainian epigram: "I shall always confine myself to the truth, except when it is attended with inconvenience." Clemens also went out of his way to promise the readers of the *Express* (and Jervis Langdon?) that he was "not going to introduce any startling reforms, nor in any way to attempt to make trouble." This is a sore point with many of Mark Twain's critics, such as Van Wyck Brooks, and it is true that, as Dixon Wecter said, "Mark's loyalty to persons always transcended his comprehension of business principles, as he demonstrated many years later in defending Standard Oil against

all comers because its ruthless Henry H. Rogers had befriended him in an hour of need."⁷ Wecter was referring to Clemens's defense of his father-in-law's interests. In 1869, for months before the arrival of Clemens, the Buffalo papers daily discussed the price of coal, the alleged coal monopoly, and the coal strike. A company was being organized in Buffalo to distribute coal to the public at "competitive prices." Clemens immediately exercised his authority. On September 23rd he wrote to Olivia, "Another of those anti-monopoly thieves sent in a long gratuitous advertisement to-night, about coal 'for the people' at \$5.50 a ton — & I have deposited it under the table. The effrontery of these people transcends everything I ever heard of. Do they suppose we print a paper for the fun of it? This man Denther sent in just such a thing the other day & I left that out. The other papers insert both of them for nothing. Day before yesterday there was a sneaking little communication in one of the other papers wondering why the Express had become so docile & quiet about the coal monopoly question. If Mr. Denther don't go mighty slow I will let off a blast at him some day that will lift the hair off his head & loosen some of his teeth."⁸

Apparently the other members of the press in Buffalo thought that Langdon had put his future son-in-law on the *Express* to soft-pedal the coal question and were needling Clemens about it. If Clemens lost anything by suppressing emotions he may have had about the profits of the Langdon Coal Company, he obtained his recompense years later by writing a blistering attack on Andrew Langdon, Jervis Langdon's brother, when Andrew was the head of the Langdon Coal Company, as "the meanest white man that ever lived on the face of the earth." This, however, was not published until February 1946 (in *Harper's Magazine* by Bernard DeVoto.)

7. *Ibid.*, 109.

8. *Ibid.*, 108-9.

Andrew Langdon was, incidentally, the president of the Buffalo Historical Society, and the donor of the bronze doors at the entrance to the Historical Building.

The "Salutatory" was the first of a regular series of contributions by Mark Twain to the *Express* during the term of his connection with the newspaper. Almost every Saturday one of his articles made its appearance. There are about sixty such articles signed by the author. Many of them were reprinted in *Roughing It* (1872), *Sketches New and Old* (1875) and *Sketches Old and New* (1893). Some of them appeared in *Galaxy* magazine before they were printed in the *Express*. The writer considered such articles his property, to be used as he saw fit, and he put them into books, sometimes with no change, often after making considerable revisions.

There must be a great number of unsigned articles in the *Express* that Clemens wrote himself or at least worked on. One of these is clearly identifiable as his because he reprinted it in the 1875 and 1893 sketch books under the title "A Fine Old Man." This article, about John Wagner of Buffalo, appeared on August 25, 1869, in a column called "People and Things," which was apparently written by the newspaper's editors. Clemens probably also wrote two of the articles that appeared in the column on August 21st. One of them dealt with Mark Twain's alleged card-playing, drinking, and smoking. It first quoted from one of its exchange newspapers and then commented:

— Mark Twain estimates the distance by rail from San Francisco to New York by 211 games of euchre, 173 drinks and 117 cigars, which shows him to be a very slow euchre player or a very rapid drinker and smoker.

— *Newark, N. J. Advertiser.*

Inasmuch as the person mentioned above smokes 117 cigars a day, and does not drink at all, there is unquestionably some mistake about the authorship of

that estimate. And would a man be likely to throw away time computing distances on the Pacific Railroad by euchre games, when he could do it so much easier by keeping account of how many times he "wished he was there?"

The other article was a characteristic slashing attack on the New York and New Haven Railroad. Clemens was a ready traveler, but a sensitive one. He liked to be comfortable. The passage is notable for its massing of details, its broad, general conclusion, its exaggeration, bluntness, and sincerity:

Ik Marvel having spoken disrespectfully of the New York and New Haven Railroad in *Hearth & Home*, that paper is banished from the trains and stations on that line. The paper that would deliberately speak respectfully of that road ought to be banished from the earth. They always charge you for a seat, but if you are not good at scrambling, you will never get one. The peddler boys begin to infest you as soon as you sit down, and they never cease to harass you with pea-nuts, magic keys, sour oranges, flash newspapers, confessions of hangmen, old doughnuts, and last year's pies, until you get to the end of the journey. But as no money can be got out of water, they keep no tanks or coolers in the cars. A small boy passes through the train every two hours and a half with a three-quart tin tea-kettle and saves many precious human lives. The smoking car is just as decent as a cell in a city prison and no more. Here and there along the route they stop five minutes for refreshments and then try to clear out before you get your change. The company's understrappers on the cars are boorish, offensive blackguards, who have been seen to crowd their way through a packed throng of gentlemen (standing up because there were no seats), and been heard to say to each other, "Make them stand out of the way livelier — knock them down if they

don't." We know this has been heard and said because we sat in one of those cars and heard and saw it. They sell seats in their high-toned "French car" in advance, at the great stations, and then after they have got your money you can do without your seat if they happen to have sold more seats than were ever in the cars. We feel reasonably sure of this matter, too, since it was a personal experience. Finally, it is the meanest, stingiest, little up-country road in America, to speak figuratively, and has not got a solitary thing to recommend it except that it never has accidents.

The passage contains at least twenty distinguishing marks to identify it as Mark Twain's.

Probably he and Josephus N. Larned, the political editor, worked together on "People and Things" in the manner Clemens described in a letter to Olivia Langdon on August 21st, the day that the above articles appeared in the *Express*. "Larned & I sit upon opposite sides of the same table," he wrote, "& it is exceedingly convenient — for if you will remember, you sometimes write until you reach the middle of a subject & then run hard aground — you know what you *want* to say, but for the life of you you can't — your ideas & your words get thick and sluggish & you are vanquished. So, occasionally, after biting our nails & scratching our heads awhile we just reach over & *swap manuscript* — & then we scribble away without the least trouble, he finishing my article & I his. Some of our patchwork editorials of this kind are all the better for the new life they get by crossing the breed."⁹ This method of collaboration makes it difficult to assign all of the humorous items in "People and Things" to Mark Twain, but since Larned was a prolific writer and all his writings are of a serious, solemn, un-humorous kind, probably all the humor in

the items is Mark Twain's. Incidentally, the artistic method mentioned here became famous later as the method used on masterpieces such as *Huckleberry Finn*. As Bernard DeVoto said in his book *Mark Twain at Work*, "In several letters and in *Mark Twain in Eruption* Mark Twain has described his episodic method of working on his books. He customarily kept half a dozen literary projects under way, taking up whichever he found most stimulating and working on it till the going got difficult or his enthusiasm slackened, then laying it aside till the 'tank' filled up and he could begin on it again with renewed energy."¹⁰

During the months of August, September, and October, Clemens boarded with the McWilliamses at 110 Oak Street. McWilliams clerked for the *Express*, and Mrs. McWilliams took a personal interest in the talented bachelor. He and McWilliams occasionally went rowing on Lake Erie, Clemens feeling that he needed the exercise. Every weekend, however, the editor took off for Elmira to see his fiancée. It was one of the advantages of living in Buffalo.

The first item by Mark Twain published in the *Express* in 1869 had appeared on July 25th. It was the "Personal Habits of the Siamese Twins," copied from *Packard's Monthly*. On August 21st there were three items, "Napoleon and Abdul," copied from *Innocents Abroad*, the "Salutatory" already mentioned, and "A Day at Niagara," a sketch that Clemens used later in his two sketch books in 1875 and 1893. The purpose of this sketch was to ridicule Cooper's ideal of the noble red man, a favorite subject of Clemens's all his writing career. It was popular on the frontier, where hostility to the Indians made Cooper's treatment seem romantic and foolish. Another purpose of the article was to make fun of the Irish, whom Clemens never liked, probably because of his experiences

9. *Ibid.*, 105.

10. Bernard DeVoto, *Mark Twain at Work*, 3.

with Irish police in San Francisco and New York, and because, in the conflict between the Irish and the Chinese in the Far West, Clemens's sympathies were all with the Chinese. Like Bret Harte, he praised the industry, the sobriety, the courtesy, and the good citizenship of the Chinese whenever he could.

The sketch consisted of three parts. The first, entitled "The Tamed Hackmen," was an attack on the cab drivers, whose high prices were a favorite subject in Buffalo, as it was thought that they discouraged tourists. The passage contained a popular pun: "They could not dam the falls, so they damned the hackmen." The second part argues that there were too many signs near the Falls, such as "No drinking allowed on these premises." And the third part, "The Noble Red Man," already discussed above, contained another pun: "I am now lying in a very critical condition. At least I am lying, anyway — critical or not critical." Of these three parts, only the third appeared in the sketch books.

On Friday, August 27th, there appeared in the *Express* what purported to be a telegram from one Michael J. Murphy, an *Express* reporter. It reported that he had tried to cross a slack-rope over Niagara Falls on a velocipede in imitation of a Professor Jenkins, but that he got stuck halfway. (Two weeks later the *Express* quoted from the Rochester *Express* to the effect that Michael J. Murphy was really Mark Twain and that the event had actually occurred.) The passage is a characteristic burlesque; the purpose, to ridicule Professor Jenkins as an "adventurous ass."

Then on the 28th Mark Twain's Saturday contribution was a continuation of the Niagara sketch of the week before, plus a satirical comment on royal birthdays. Since his reputation as a drinker was newsworthy, he argued that there were too many royal birthdays because he had to drink at all of them, i. e. too much soda-water, lemonade, and ice-water.

On September 2nd the *Express* had "The Wonderful Two-Headed Girl" and "The California Pioneers." The first of these exploited the humorous possibilities of a freak, just as the idea of the Siamese twins seemed to intrigue the humorist in Clemens. The second was an occasional tribute to a group that the author genuinely admired, witness his letter to the New York Society of California Pioneers, written a month later.

"Tennessee Journalism" appeared in the *Express* on Saturday, September 4, 1869, after having been advertised in advance of publication for a week. It appeared in the sketch books as "Journalism in Tennessee," obviously a favorite of the author's, a very funny contrast between journalism in the East, where civilization has made journalism tame, and journalism in the South (or West), where the editor has to keep a gun on his desk as he writes. It is skillfully written, full of exaggeration and understatement, and as usual the narrator is the calm and innocent victim of customs he pretends not to understand.

On September 9th two paragraphs in "People and Things" seem clearly Mark Twain's, one about a boy who has used tobacco since he was five years old, and the other about an earthquake-predicting machine.

On Saturday, September 11th, "The Last Words of Great Men" appeared. Harriet Beecher Stowe's article in the *Atlantic* revealing Byron's alleged incestuous relations with his sister had been published during the summer and had created a great stir. Mrs. Stowe had been widely accused of scandalmongering. Clemens felt that the story was being given too much attention. In the sketch he said that Ben Franklin, whom he called the Josh Billings of the eighteenth century, had said on his death bed: "None but the brave deserve the fair," Joan of Arc's last words were: "Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching," and Lord Byron died with these words on his lips: "Augusta — sister

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—Lady Byron—tell Harriet Beecher Stowe.” Mrs. Fairbanks, Clemens’s Cleveland “Mother,” thought this irreverent, and Clemens apologized for it.

However, the following Saturday, “The Wild Man Interviewed” (advertised to appear on September 11th but not published till September 18th) ridiculed the sensational treatment of the Stowe story. It concluded with the following: “Whither, poor shade?” “To dig up the Byron family.” “What is your name?” “Sensation!”

On Saturday, September 25th, Clemens, who was personally acquainted already with Mrs. Stowe’s two brothers, Thomas K. Beecher, Congregationalist minister of the Langdons in Elmira, and Henry Ward Beecher, pretended to know Henry Ward’s private habits in order to ridicule the public hunger for information about the private life of famous men.

On Tuesday, September 28th, the *Express* published an article by Mark Twain in which he pretended resentment because Prince Arthur of Connaught, who was visiting the area, paid no attention to the writer. Some years later he recalled this incident when he met Prince Arthur in England.

On Thursday, September 30th, he took advantage of an opportunity he had probably sought for a long time. Some twenty years before, George Horatio Derby, writing under the name of John Phoenix, with whose writing Clemens was familiar, had written an editorial during the absence of the real editor in which he had advanced ridiculous ideas and made propositions counter to those the real editor supported. In the absence of the political editor of the *Express*, Josephus N. Larned, a serious man who in 1872 became Superintendent of Public Instruction in Buffalo and who in 1894 wrote a set of five huge tomes entitled *History for Ready Reference and Topical Reading*, Clemens wrote a humorous editorial supporting George William Curtis for Secretary of State in

New York. Larned was also for Curtis, who was the editor of *Harper’s* magazine, and a Republican, but Clemens ridiculed the partisan Republicanism of the editor by stating that Larned would find good reasons for supporting Curtis even though he had probably never heard of him before. Curtis declined the nomination the next day. This editorial of Clemens’s has been reprinted once, by the Buffalo Historical Society in 1915 in its *Publications*, Volume 19, p. 338.

On Saturday, October 2nd, “The Latest Novelty. Mental Photographs,” contained a Mark Twain proverb that was repeated many times in other contexts, with slight variations, during the rest of Mark Twain’s life: “Be virtuous and you will be eccentric.”

On October 16th there appeared the first of a series of letters supposedly written in collaboration with a Professor David R. Ford of Elmira College, who was travelling around the world with Charles Langdon, Olivia’s brother. Professor Ford did not fulfill his part of the arrangement, and Clemens had to invent ten of the twelve letters that were published in the *Express*. On March 26, 1870, Clemens complained to the Langdons that in six months Ford had written only two letters. The idea of gathering material for sketches by proxy was unique with Clemens, who felt that he could write the travel letters if someone else would do the actual travelling, but it never worked.

On Tuesday, October 19th, “Mark Twain—His Greeting to the California Pioneers” appeared. This was written for the meeting of the New York Society of California Pioneers held in New York City on October 13th and was read at that meeting. It was apparently written in Elmira, and Paine, Mark Twain’s official biographer, included it in his *Letters*, (I, 163-165.)

“The Legend of the Capitoline Venue” appeared the following Saturday, October 23rd. It was intended to ridicule the hoax

of the Petrified Man. Clemens apparently liked this sketch, for it is included in the 1875 sketch book.

On October 30th, also a Saturday, the second "Around the World" article appeared. Clemens pretended to have been visiting in Hayti, to have been shocked by the high prices only to discover that the exchange rate actually made the prices quite reasonable. The sketch indicates the author's skill in exploiting the contrasts between coinage systems. He was to deal more adequately with the same subject in *The Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889.)

Thus in less than three months Clemens had written for the *Express* about twenty items, most of which had appeared on Saturday. At the end of October he was off on a lecture tour that took him into Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York, and which ended conveniently on January 20, 1870, in the vicinity of Elmira so that he could have about a week to prepare for his wedding, for which the set date was February 2, 1870. He lectured in many small towns such as Danvers and Clinton in Massachusetts, and Cambridge, Fredonia, and Hornellsville in New York, travelling most of the time by train and using Boston and Hartford as headquarters when in that area. In Hartford, largely as the result of the tremendous publicity given to the publication and sale of *Innocents Abroad*, Charles Dudley Warner made it clear that he had changed his mind and very much wanted Sam Clemens as an editor of the *Courant*. Clemens enjoyed his revenge, his self-esteem having been injured by the lack of enthusiasm some months before. On November 24th he wrote to Olivia: "Livy darling, I guess we couldn't pull loose all the Buffalo anchors easily, & so we may as well give up Hartford — but my gracious, wouldn't I like to tilt that *Courant* against the complacent Springfield Republican & make that journal sick."¹¹ And on December 27th he wrote

that he was getting malicious pleasure out of the pressure being put on him by the Hartford people. Considering all this, it is a wonder that he stayed in Buffalo as long as he did and quite understandable that after the death of Mr. Langdon the pull of Hartford should be too much for him.

The lecture tour and the sale of *Innocents Abroad* were sufficiently lucrative so that by January, 1870, Clemens had paid \$15,000 out of his own pocket on his several debts and still had three or four thousand left in hand — without drawing a penny from the *Express*. He could afford to give up lecturing and turn his attention to his various literary ventures. On January 22, 1870, he wrote to Bliss that he had another idea for a book on Noah's Ark and was sorry he had mentioned it because someone might steal it. He was also negotiating with Charles Henry Webb for the copyright to his first book, *The Jumping Frog and Other Sketches*, which Webb had published in 1867. In his letter to Bliss Clemens talked as if he were suing Webb, but the facts were against him, and he ended a year later by paying Webb for the copyright to his own book, as he complained shortly afterward. Clemens frequently threatened to prosecute those who did not agree with him in matters of business, but he usually found that he did not have a case. The psychology became standard with him, probably as a by-product of his artistic temper, his tremendous energy, and the need to discharge his emotions in some direction. He always had to have more than one iron in the fire. He was editor of the *Express*, a successful lecturer very much in demand, the author of a best-seller, the owner of the copyright of another book, and the recipient of many offers from publishing houses for more books, but he was restless. He was about to marry the daughter of a very wealthy man, and in order to win her he made a solemn prom-

11. *Love Letters*, 124.

ise that he would settle down, but the probability that he would settle down was not very great. As Paine pointed out in the official biography, he did not yet see how he could devote all his time to writing books. It took about one more year for him to make up his mind that he could.

While absent from his editorial office during these months of lecturing, Clemens made frequent contributions to the *Express* by mail. The first of these, "A Good Letter. Mark Twain's Idea of It," characteristically argued for simplicity, honesty, and naturalness. "If you would learn the art of letter writing, let a child teach you," he wrote. This appeared in the *Express* on Wednesday, November 10th. On Saturday, November 13th the third "Around the World" letter appeared; it dealt with his own experience in California, and was the first of a series of articles that Clemens was later to use in his third book, *Roughing It*. Note, however, that these articles were published in the *Express* before the idea of the third book was mentioned.

The following Saturday, November 27th, Clemens wrote from Boston an article entitled "Browsing Around." It began with an account of the death in a railway accident of the son of Joseph Glover Baldwin, the author of *Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi*, and indicates knowledge and appreciation of that classic of Southern humor. The last portion of the article dealt with a subject that was increasingly on Clemens's mind in 1869 and after, the excessive public sentimentality toward murderers. "Is it well," he wrote, "to glorify a murderous villain on the scaffold as Pike was glorified in New Hampshire a few days ago?" This portion of the article was reprinted in the 1875 sketch book under the title, "Lionizing Murderers."

A second "Browsing Around" article appeared the next Saturday, December 4th; it attacked American snobs who go to Europe and then turn up their noses at everything American.

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A fourth "Around the World" article appeared on December 11th. Like the third, it dealt with California and provided material for *Roughing It*. The titles of the parts also appeared in the book: "The Early Days," "The Sex on Exhibition," "Exorbitant Rates," "Touching Spectacle," and "The Famous Cement Mine."

The subject was continued the next week in the fifth "Around the World" article, which contained "Baker's Cat," one of the best sketches in *Roughing It*, a story that Jim Gillis is reputed to have told Clemens on Jackass Hill in 1865 or 1866. Dick Baker was Dick Stoker, according to Clemens. The sketch is chiefly notable for its colloquial language, but it is also a notable Western bestiary, and its use of the framework technique is as characteristic of the author and as skillful as the jumping frog story.

On Monday, December 20th, there appeared in the *Express* an article entitled "Innocence at Home; or Hunting a Hero in Washington," and signed "Little Red Riding Hood." It is dated from Washington, December 15th, and mentions a lecture in Philadelphia the night before. Clemens lectured in Germantown on December 9th, in Mt. Vernon, New York, on the 10th, and then swung back into New England.

"Ye Cuban Patriot. A Calm Inspection of Him," appeared on Saturday, December 25th. It had been written in Boston. "I do not love the Cuban patriot or the Cuban oppressor of him," said Clemens. This is a characteristic expression of the author's realism.

The following Saturday, January 1, 1870, "An Awful Terrible Medieval Romance," appeared. A satire on romance, it was reprinted in the *Burlesque Autobiography* pamphlet in 1871 and in the 1875 sketch book.

Letters six, seven, and eight of the "Around the World" series appeared on January 8th, 22nd, and 29th. The sixth and seventh letters included material later

used in *Roughing It* (Early Days in Nevada," "Silver Land Nabobs," "Chinamen," "Desperadoes," "Sam Brown," "Jack Williams," and "Mr. Slade,") and the eighth letter was a sketch that has never been reprinted, "Dining with a Cannibal," in which a cannibal who thinks he has eaten a Frenchman learns he has eaten his own brother.

"A Ghost Story," a sketch ridiculing the Petrified Man hoax and the gullibility of the general public, appeared on January 15th. Clemens thought enough of it to include it in both the 1875 and 1893 sketch books.

On January 31st the last sketch written on the lecture tour and before Clemens's marriage, was published in the *Express*. Entitled "George Francis Train," it ridiculed a popular politician whom Clemens detested. Train introduced tramways into England, supported Irish freedom and female suffrage, and lectured widely in 1869.

Olivia Langdon and Sam Clemens were married in Elmira on February 2, 1870, by two ministers, Joseph Hopkins Twichell of Hartford, who was to become Sam's intimate friend for the rest of his life, and Thomas K. Beecher, brother of Henry Ward Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe. The wedding party, which was fairly large, accompanied the bride and groom to Buffalo in a special train borrowed for the occasion, and in Buffalo congregated at 472 Delaware Avenue to greet the surprised groom with the news that his father-in-law had purchased the home for the newlyweds.

Then the Clemenses began a three-month honeymoon in their new Buffalo home. Their intention was to stay permanently in Buffalo. But within a month there were disturbing rumors that they were moving to Hartford. On March 3rd Clemens found it necessary to write to his father-in-law to explain the source of the rumors. "The report of my intending to leave Buffalo," he wrote, "Livy and I concluded emanates from Hartford, for the

reason that it really started in the newspapers only a very little while after my last visit and your last letter to Hartford, and has been afloat ever since."¹² Then during the week of March 8 through March 12 Clemens published daily on the editorial page in a prominent position and in larger type than was customary on that page a notice to the effect that he was not leaving Buffalo. It read: "The paragraphs now going the rounds of the press to the effect that I am going to withdraw from Buffalo and the Buffalo *Express* is [*sic*] entirely without foundation. I am a permanency here. I am prospering well enough to please my friends and distress my enemies, and consequently am in a state of tranquil satisfaction. I will regard it as a favor if those journals that printed the item referred to will mention this correction. Samuel L. Clemens 'Mark Twain.'"

On March 26th Clemens reported to his father-in-law that he had accepted the editorship of a department in *Galaxy* magazine, New York, for \$2,000 a year, and that he intended to continue to write one or two sketches for the *Express* each month, but no more. He expected these positions to take very little of his time, so that he could devote his attention to a new book, as *Innocents Abroad* was each month selling nine to ten thousand copies, netting him \$1,400.

Thus, during the spring of 1870 Clemens settled down to his Buffalo job, worked on articles for *Galaxy*, planned a new book, and looked forward to a summer of traveling in Europe with his wife and her parents.

He also continued his regular contributions to the *Express*. The ninth and tenth letters of the "Around the World" series, initialed D. R. F. (David R. Ford) were published as Mark Twain's on February 12th and March 5th. They were probably the only two letters genuinely a result of

12. *Ibid.*, 148.

the collaboration announced when the first letter appeared. One of them was entitled "The Pacific," and the other "Japan."

On February 5th Clemens published in the *Express* a tribute to Anson Burlingame, who had just died. Clemens felt an especial indebtedness to Burlingame, for he had helped him gather the details for the article on the Hornet disaster that had been published in *Harpers* in 1866. Burlingame, who had been Minister to China, encouraged Clemens to greater self-esteem, and Clemens never forgot it. He refers to Burlingame frequently in his writings.

On March 12, a Saturday, "A Big Thing," an article on "The Richest Silver Mine in the World in Kentucky," appeared.

The following Saturday, March 19th, "A Mysterious Visit" appeared. It dealt with the income tax, showed how it made liars out of ordinarily truthful people, and ridiculed the "solid citizens" who falsified their deductions. This sketch was reprinted in both the 1875 and 1893 sketch books.

On Saturday, March 19th, "Literary" appeared. It was a review of "Williams and Packard's System of Penmanship" and was written because the book had been published by Slote, Woodman, and Company, of which Dan Slote, who had shared a stateroom with Clemens on the *Quaker City* in 1867, was an owner.

One of the most interesting of Mark Twain's contributions to the *Express* appeared on April 2, 1870. It was "The Facts in the Great Landslide Case." The earliest version of this sketch, which Clemens used in *Roughing It* in 1872, appeared in the *San Francisco Morning Call* on August 30, 1862. It was very short, only about two hundred words, and clearly factual. Mark Twain was then a reporter on the Virginia City (Nevada) *Territorial Enterprise*. General Bunker, whom Clemens knew personally, was an unpopular United States Attorney. A farm belonging to Tom Rust slid down a mountainside

and covered Dick Sides's ranch completely. To play a practical joke on Bunker, Dick pretended to be incensed and asked Bunker to sue Rust. The case came to court, the judge, ex-Governor Roop, was in on the joke, the evidence seemed to be all on the side of the plaintiff, but the judge gave the defendant the decision because the plaintiff "had been deprived of his ranch by the visitation of God!" "And," concluded the judge, "from this decision there is no appeal." In the *Express* version, Tom Rust became Tom Morgan, General Bunker became General Buncombe, and the whole sketch became an expanded fiction, complete with dialogue, atmosphere, climax, anticlimax, exaggeration, understatement, burlesque, and a host of new details. The *Express* version was reprinted in 1871 in L. J. Bigelow's *Bench and Bar. A Complete Digest of the Wit, Humor, Asperities of the Law* (N. Y., Harper and Bros., 1871, 311-312), without credit to the author! In *Roughing It* (1872) the Landslide sketch appeared as Chapter XXXIV in Volume I, slightly altered. In this version Dick Sides became Dick Hyde, and some of the sentences were revised. For instance, in the *Express* version, the last sentence said: "At the end of two weeks he got it through his understanding that he had been played upon with a joke." In *Roughing It* the last sentence was: "At the end of two months the fact that he had been played upon with a joke had managed to bore itself, like another Hoosac Tunnel, through the solid adamant of his understanding."

On April 12th the *Express* reprinted from *Galaxy* a mock letter to the editor from Mark Twain entitled "Mark Twain on Agriculture." The purpose of the article was to ridicule Horace Greeley, the editor of the New York *Tribune*, who had written a book entitled "What I Know About Agriculture." Mark Twain said that he was going to write about agriculture although he admitted he knew nothing about it.

In April also he became interested in the murder trial of one McFarland, who had shot A. D. Richardson in the office of the New York *Tribune*. Richardson was a friend of Clemens and had himself written a book on his travels in the Far West, *Beyond the Mississippi*, which had been published by the American Publishing Company in 1867. Mark Twain had consulted with him concerning royalties, and respected him as a man and a writer. But McFarland had murdered Richardson because he claimed Richardson had stolen his wife, and it took some courage in those days to defend Richardson. Henry Ward Beecher defended him publicly. He had indeed performed a marriage ceremony for Mrs. McFarland and Richardson as Richardson lay on his deathbed. Beecher said that Mrs. McFarland had just obtained a divorce in Indiana, and that she had had sufficient provocation. McFarland was acquitted in a sensational trial. Clemens wrote a sketch, "A New Plea," which was published in the *Express* on April 16th, which did not defend Richardson, but attacked the insanity plea. McFarland, he said, should not be tried for murdering Richardson, but for mistreating his wife. He cited other cases, however, of murderers pleading insanity, ridiculing the judges, the jury, and the public. The sketch was a remarkable foreshadowing of recent books by psychiatrists on the insanity plea, notably Frederic Wertham's *Show of Violence* (New York: Doubleday, 1948), and was reprinted in the 1875 sketch book, as "A New Crime," without mention of the McFarland case! Did Clemens change his mind about Richardson?

In April he published first in *Galaxy* and then in the *Express* (on Saturday, April 23rd) "The Story of the Good Little Boy Who Did Not Prosper," an important sketch which was later reprinted in the 1875 and 1893 sketch books. It was an attack on conventional notions of morality and a kind of preparation for *Tom Sawyer*

and *Huckleberry Finn*, in which the "good" boy is a kind of sissy, and the "bad" boy is the hero.

The two following Saturdays, April 30th and May 7th, saw the publication in two parts of "A Curious Dream. Containing a Moral," which has a local interest since it is a criticism of the neglect of a graveyard in Buffalo. The narrator dreamt that the tenants of the graveyard were leaving in disgust. However, Clemens thought enough of the sketch to include it in both the 1875 and 1893 sketch books.

On May 9th, a Monday, Clemens defended his attack on the Reverend DeWitt Talmage in the April *Galaxy* by the strategic method, which became fairly standard with him, of quoting his opponent and then attacking from another position entirely. He ended by saying that Mr. Talmage was a good man, but a "literary cripple."

On Saturday, May 14th, he returned to the McFarland murder in an article entitled "Our Precious Lunatic." He attacked the verdict in the case on the logical ground that McFarland ought to have been committed to an insane asylum if he were innocent of the murder because he was insane. It was a slashing attack on sentimentality.

On Saturday, June 4th, "More Distinction" appeared in the *Express*, a sketch that was reprinted in the 1875 sketch book under the title "To Raise Poultry." It was an elaborate pun on the word "raise." Elected an honorary member of the Western New York Poultry Society, Clemens proceeded to offer advice on how to "raise" chickens, i. e. to steal them.

On June 24th a most interesting item appeared in the *Express*. An account of the commencement exercises of the Buffalo Female Academy, it reported the various parts of the program, including a reading by Mr. David Gray, editor of the Buffalo *Courier* (Democratic political rival of the *Express*) of the report of a committee consisting of Mr. Gray and Mr.

Samuel L. Clemens of the *Express*. Mr. Clemens wrote the report, which was a vindication of the judgment of the committee in selecting as the prize essays written by the graduating classes "the least showy of the eighteen submitted, perhaps — but . . . the least artificial, the least labored, the clearest and shapeliest, and the best carried out." It is a remarkable piece of literary criticism, not only because the judges recognized the need to explain why their judgment was bound to be different from the judgment of the teachers, perhaps, or of the general public in 1870, but also because, knowing so much of the writing was bad, the critic went out of his way to point out why it was bad and to elucidate in detail the good points of the winning essays. Clemens handled the situation with great tact and sympathy. He did not blame the students for writing as they did, but attributed their faults to the models which they were taught to imitate. "Nearly all the compositions submitted to us," he said, "would have been right creditable specimens of literary handiwork, if the sermons had been left out of them. But, while some of these latter were the expression of a genuine impulse, the great majority of them were so manifestly dragged in and hitched on to the essay (out of pure force of habit, and therefore unconsciously, we are willing to believe, but still plainly dragged in), that they sadly marred some of the compositions and entirely spoiled one or two. Religion is the highest and holiest thing on earth, and a strained or compulsory expression of it is not gracious, or commendable, or befitting its dignity."

"However," he continued, "we have the hardihood to say, in this place, that considering the Standard School Readers' and other popular and unspeakably execrable models which young people are defrauded into accepting as fine literary composition, the real wonder is, not that pupils attempt subjects which they would be afraid of at forty, and then write floridly instead of

simply, and start without premises and wind up without tangible result, but that they write at all without bringing upon themselves suspicions of imbecility."

"The Editorial Office Bore" appeared in *Galaxy* in June and in the *Express* on Saturday, June 25th. It was reprinted in both the 1875 and 1893 sketchbooks. In July "How I Edited An Agricultural Paper," a sketch ridiculing those who write for newspapers on subjects they know nothing about, appeared in *Galaxy*, was reprinted in the *Express* on July 2nd, in the 1875 and 1893 sketchbooks, and in *Mark Twain's Library of Humor* (1888.)

Near the end of July (the 25th), Clemens amused himself at the expense of the combatants in the Franco-Prussian War with a burlesque of war bulletins and headlines, fake dispatches from London, all beginning "No battle has been fought yet," and a telegram from Marshal McMahon, in Irish dialect and signed "Mike." Readers of the *Express* must have wondered if the war were actually taking place as they read, "If they do not die of old age first, there will be bloodshed in this war yet."

Meanwhile the life of the newly married couple was considerably altered by the illness and death of Jervis Langdon. In the late spring he had suffered from chronic indigestion. The Clemenses hurried to Elmira to sit by Mr. Langdon's bedside and nurse him during the hot summer. At one point, Mr. Langdon rallied, and the Clemenses, who had cancelled a trip to Europe they had planned to take with the Langdons, planned a trip to the Adirondacks with the Twichells. Clemens made a hurried trip to Washington on business, something to do with legislation that could have affected the value of the Tennessee land inherited by the Clemens family. He had his photograph taken by Matthew Brady while he was there. Then Mr. Langdon died on August 6th; Clemens wrote a glowing tribute to his father-in-law published in the *Express* on August 8th.

On July 15th Clemens had signed a contract with Elisha Bliss of the American Publishing Company to produce by January 1, 1871, a six-hundred-page book about his experiences in California and Nevada. Bliss suggested the topic of the book, as he later suggested the title. *Innocents Abroad* had been a mixture of autobiography, fiction, and humor. It was reasonable to believe that another such book, based partly on Clemens's life in the Far West, would also sell. Both Clemens and Bliss were interested in exploiting Clemens's popularity, and although *Roughing It*, which was finally published in 1872, was not a best-seller like *Innocents Abroad*, it was probably a better book. It was certainly a funnier one, and it sold well.

At the time he signed the contract Clemens intended to produce the book within six months. He had already written for the *Express* several sketches that could be incorporated into the book, and he had in his possession a complete file of the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise*, from which he could clip and paste many items that he had written in the early sixties. As a matter of fact he did make use of these sources, but the book that was planned for completion by January 1, 1871, was not completed until the end of 1871, and was not published until 1872.

Personal difficulties interfered with the writer's intentions. On the day he signed the contract he wrote to his brother Orion to ask his assistance in recalling details of the overland trip the two had taken together exactly ten years before. Orion supplied him with a memorandum, which Clemens acknowledged; he said it would help him. The memorandum has disappeared, and it is impossible to say what use Clemens made of it.

When he wrote to Orion, he was full of confidence and said that he had begun the book that day, July 15th, but twelve days later he was somewhat less confident and wrote that he expected to begin the

book in a month. He was too busy helping his wife nurse his father-in-law and trying to preserve his wife's strength, who, always frail, had been a bedridden invalid for years before her marriage. Clemens took his turn "watching" by Mr. Langdon's bedside, often from midnight to four in the morning. He had neither the time nor the desire to write anything.

When Mr. Langdon died on August 6th, Mrs. Langdon was prostrate with grief and fatigue. The Clemenses gave up their plans for a vacation in the Adirondacks and went home to Buffalo accompanied by Mrs. Langdon and a friend of Mrs. Clemens, Miss Emma Nye. It was the end of August before Clemens was able to begin work on the new book.

During the last days of August and the early days of September Clemens wrote four chapters, probably the first four chapters of the book. He was back in harness at the *Express*, going daily from his home on Delaware Avenue to the *Express* office on Swan Street. On August 31st he wrote to his sister, who was living with his mother in Fredonia, that he was driving himself to complete his manuscript on time. "We are getting along tolerably well," he wrote. "Mother is here, and Miss Emma Nye. Livy cannot sleep since her father's death — but I give her a narcotic every night and *make* her. I am just as busy as can be — am still writing for *Galaxy* and also writing a book like the 'Innocents' in size and style. I have got my work ciphered down to *days* and I haven't a single day to spare between this date and the date which, by written contract, I am to deliver the M.S. to the publisher."¹³

Then a new trouble entered the household. On September 2nd Clemens wrote to Mrs. Fairbanks that Miss Emma Nye, who had come to Buffalo to help Mrs. Clemens, was herself ill.

13. Albert Bigelow Paine, *Mark Twain's Letters*, I, 176.

Progress on the book was slow, but by September 19th he had written seven or eight chapters. It was terribly difficult to write humorous sketches in such a gloomy household. The barbaric custom of a year of mourning isolated the Clemenses from the social intercourse that might have made things easier for them. Years later it was this that remained in Clemens's mind as the chief source of their misery: in his *Autobiography* he spoke of his "sorrowful and pathetic brief sojourn in Buffalo, where we became hermits, and could have no human comradeship except that of young David Gray and his young wife and their baby boy."¹⁴

And Miss Nye, who had typhoid fever, grew steadily worse. It was now understood that she was dying, and the house was full of doctors and nurses. Mrs. Clemens, herself exhausted in body and spirit, arose from her sick bed to help, but in vain, for on September 29th Miss Nye died. The distraught writer complained in letters to his publisher that during the month he had had no time to turn around and that they were all fagged out. Coming so soon after the illness and death of Mr. Langdon, the illness and death of Miss Nye and the illness of his wife, who was also carrying her first child, affected Clemens deeply. In after years he described the period as "the blackest, the gloomiest, the most wretched" of his long life.¹⁵ It is no wonder that he hated the city and everything that reminded him of it.

In spite of the difficulties he plodded on, trying to write funny sketches in the midst of his troubles. On October 13th he wrote to Bliss: "I am driveling along tolerably well on the book, getting off from 12 to 20 pages a day. I am writing it so carefully that I'll never have to alter a sentence I guess, but it is very slow work. I like it as far as I have got. The people

will read it."¹⁶ Assuming that these remarks refer to the first quarter of *Roughing It*, it is clear now that he was right, for the story of the overland trip in that section of the book is extremely popular. As noted, it was written in Buffalo.

Meanwhile, Clemens's troubles were not over. Mrs. Clemens was still quite ill. Miss Clara Spaulding, another friend of the Langdon family (she is referred to as "Aunt Clara" in the Clemens family for the next thirty years), came to Buffalo to cheer them. When she departed, Mrs. Clemens insisted on accompanying her in a hurried trip over the cobbled streets to catch a train. On her return Mrs. Clemens was prostrated, and a little later, on November 7th, gave birth prematurely to her first child, Langdon Clemens. As a result, she was dangerously ill and bedridden all winter.

Work on the book bogged down completely. "In three whole months," wrote Clemens to Bliss the following March, "I have hardly written a page of manuscript."¹⁷ Thus circumstances beyond the writer's control compelled him to abandon the idea of producing manuscript for the six-hundred-page book by January 1, 1871, in accordance with his "written obligation." The deadline had to be postponed until such time as the writer could muster the time, the will, and the force to bring the project to conclusion.

But, harried as he was, Clemens found time and energy to write his weekly article for the *Express* and to engage in other literary projects. On September 17th, the *Express* published his "Fortifications of Paris" with a map of Paris printed upside down—in the center, Paris; at the right, Verdun and Jersey City, Vincennes and Podunk; at the left, the Rhine River and the Erie Canal; the reader was advised to stand on his head or hold the map before a looking-glass; this was followed by

14. Paine, ed., *Autobiography*, II, 118.

15. DeVoto, *Mark Twain in Eruption*, 251.

16. Unpublished letter to Elisha Bliss, in University of California Library.

17. Unpublished letter to Elisha Bliss.

such testimonials as: "I cannot look upon it without shedding tears," signed Brigham Young.

"At the President's Reception," in the *Express* on October 1st, related how Mark Twain held up the President's reception line to tell the President about Jim Nye, Bill Stewart, Tom Fitch and others. His Buffalo readers, certainly unfamiliar with these names of Clemens's friends in Nevada, must have been mystified. The sketch alternated between a monologue directed at the President and complaints to the man next in line about his interfering in his "conversation."

"Curious Relic for Sale," in the *Express* on October 8th, must have been saved from the material written for *Innocents Abroad*. It was a reminiscence of an imaginary episode on the *Quaker City* excursion. The curious relic was a pipe "believed to have belonged to the justly renowned Witch of Endor." The smell of the pipe drove everyone off, convincing Mark Twain that it *must* have belonged to the Witch of Endor.

On October 15th "Mark Twain. His Map of Fortifications of Paris" appeared in the *Express*. It probably did not greatly amuse the many German readers in Buffalo, who might have resented the following: "At Omaha and the High Bridge are vast masses of Prussian infantry, and it is only fair to say that they are likely to *stay* there, as that figure of a window sash between them stands for a brewery." However, it is possible that the *Express* did not have many German readers, as there were three German newspapers in Buffalo at the time, two of them published entirely in the German language, and many of the Germans were Democrats who read the *Courier*.

Two weeks later the *Express* printed "On Riley — Newspaper Correspondent," which contained one of Clemens's best puns, one which he had used before in one of his Sandwich Island letters. A woman is shedding copious tears over the

loss of a servant who had been burned to a crisp when she accidentally got too close to a stove. When asked for an appropriate epitaph for her gravestone, Riley quickly said: "Put 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'" and never smiled. Clemens reprinted this sketch in both the 1875 and 1893 sketch books.

On November 5th the *Express* had another sketch which Clemens liked well enough to reprint in 1875 and 1893. It was "A Reminiscence of the Back Settlements," which later was entitled "The Undertaker's Chat." The sketch, using the framework technique and dialect, was very funny because of the incongruity between the cheerfulness of the undertaker and the gravity of his subject. It was possibly a preparation for the funeral in *Huckleberry Finn*. One of the passages sounds like Huck: "Well, the relations they wanted a big funeral, but the corpse said he was down on flummery — didn't want any procession —."

On November 12th Mark Twain, in a sketch entitled "A General Reply," urged literary aspirants to "write without pay until somebody offers pay" as a method of entering the literary profession. His advice reveals the professional in many ways: the complaints about correspondents who ask for criticism of manuscripts and letters of introduction to editors, the insistence upon hard work and long apprenticeship, the asseveration that good writers are so scarce editors are constantly seeking them, the refusal to pass judgment on the quality of the aspirant's literary work because "the public is the only critic whose judgment is worth anything at all." In his autobiography Clemens said that he invariably told anyone who asked him for a job or a recommendation that the way to get into anything was to offer to work for nothing. His comments on literary work show that he himself at the time he wrote the sketch was receiving so many offers from book and periodical publishers that he could not meet the

demand. They also show that he had a high regard for the art of writing and considered an hour spent on a single sentence not excessive.

In the fall of 1870 Clemens took a mild interest in the gubernatorial campaign in New York. Stewart L. Woodford was the Republican candidate, and the incumbent Governor, John T. Hoffman, the Democratic candidate. Newspapers were blatantly partisan, and the *Express*, a Republican paper, reported the election of the Democrat as an "unmixed disaster." The election was on November 8th, the *Express* report was published on November 9th, and on November 19th Clemens ridiculed the whole business in a sketch that he liked well enough to reprint in both the 1875 and 1893 sketch books (with the names of the candidates changed) under the title "Running for Governor." Pretending that he himself had entered the race as an independent candidate, he reported that the newspapers had first suggested, then asseverated that he was guilty of all manner of crime, and ended by calling him Twain the Infamous Perjurer, Twain the Montana Thief, Twain the Body Snatcher, Delirium Tremens Twain, Twain the Filthy Corruptionist, and Twain the Loathsome Embracer. The article concluded with his sending in his withdrawal from the candidacy, and, "in bitterness of spirit" signing it "Mark Twain, I. P., M. T., B.S., D.T., F.C., and L.E." What Josephus N. Larned, the political editor of the *Express*, thought of this is not known. Clemens, who often afterwards spoke of David Gray, the editor of the *Courier*, as a good friend, never mentioned Larned, and Larned, who was a prolific writer on politics and history, and who edited the life and works of David Gray, never mentioned Clemens. Possibly their collaboration was not satisfactory to either.

On November 26th "My Watch — An Instructive Little Tale," demonstrated the artist's characteristic explosion over some

trifling annoyance. A humorous sketch, it is a terrific blast against watchmakers, probably provoked by practically nothing at all. As usual Clemens contemplated murder. "I brained him on the spot and had him buried at my own expense," he wrote. Carefully written, it was obviously produced to release nervous tensions that had little to do with watchmakers. The sketch was reprinted in the 1875 sketch book.

On December 3rd, reprinted from *Galaxy*, the *Express* had "An Entertaining Article," in which Clemens faked a "serious" review of *Innocents Abroad*, the sort of review that might have been written by a thoroughly dense, ignorant, and solemn ass. The purpose of the review was to advertise the book by ridiculing those who took Clemens's statements literally, if there were such. Clemens always assumed that there were critics who did not know when he was joking. There may have been.

On December 10th "Dogberry in Washington" included another attack on someone who had annoyed the writer, this time the Buffalo postmaster, who had unreasonably required full letter postage for magazine manuscript. The article also faked some criticism of the "Map of Paris" by some idiot who took it seriously.

On December 17th "The Facts in the Case of George Fisher, Deceased," reprinted from *Galaxy*, ridiculed unprincipled attempts to swindle the government by fantastic claims and the stupidity of the government in paying them. This sketch appeared in both the 1875 and 1893 sketch books.

On December 24th two items were reprinted from *Galaxy*, "A Sad, Sad Business" and "Mean People." The first was a confession that the faked review of *Innocents Abroad* was written in its entirety by Mark Twain. Clemens claimed that he had to prove this because there were some people so dense they would not believe it. The other item was an exercise in ingenuity in describing meanness. This

one is about a sailor who saved the captain's son from drowning and was thrown into double irons for three weeks for leaving the ship without orders.

On January 28, 1871, "The Danger of Lying in Bed" proved by statistics that more people die at home in their beds than on the railroads. This was the last of Mark Twain's contributions to the *Express*.

The other literary projects in which he was engaged during these hectic months was a plan to write a book about the South African mines, the publication of a burlesque autobiography, and the preparation for the press of a new edition of his first book, *The Jumping Frog and Other Sketches*.

With the financial assistance of Bliss he proposed to send his friend Riley to the diamond mines to collect material which he (Clemens) was to put in book form. (Clemens first became acquainted with Riley in Washington in 1868. He was the hero of the sketch, "Riley — Newspaper Correspondent," first published in the *Express*, October 29, 1870.) The project was to be secret, lest some other writer or publisher use the idea. "Say yes or no quick," he wrote to Bliss on November 28th, "for this thing is brim full of fame or fortune for both author and publisher. Expeditious is the word and I don't want any timidity or hesitancy now."¹⁸ This is so much like the language of Colonel Sellers in *The Gilded Age* ("Mum's the word — don't whisper — keep yourself to yourself. You'll see! Come! — rush! — hurry! — don't wait for anything!") one is tempted to extend the comparison to the speakers and the incidents, and there is certainly something of Colonel Sellers in the Clemens who wrote to Bliss of his plans for Riley and something of Sellers's fate in the outcome of the Riley expedition.

Bliss agreed to advance the money needed, and the literary emissary departed for South Africa. But on the return voy-

age he accidentally stabbed himself with a fork and later died of blood poisoning. The book which was to win fame and fortune for author and publisher was never written.

The Riley expedition took a good deal of the author's time in November, 1870, when he could not work on *Roughing It*. In December he became involved in the publication of his third book, the *Burlesque Autobiography and First Romance*, actually a pamphlet of little value which Clemens was to regret having published. In it appeared the "Awful Terrible Medieval Romance," which was first published in the *Express* on January 1, 1870.

In response to a telegram from the publishers Sheldon & Company Clemens went to New York City for the week of December 10 to 17, 1870, to purchase from Charles Henry Webb the copyright on his first book, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog and Other Sketches*. He paid \$1400 (\$600 for indebtedness and \$800 cash) for his share of the copyright. "Think of purchasing one's own property after never having received one cent after publication!" he wrote to Mrs. Fairbanks.¹⁹

In January, 1871, he was projecting another volume of sketches, "working like sin on it," he wrote to Bliss on January 3rd. "Name the Sketch Book 'Mark Twain's Sketches' and go on canvassing like mad. Because if you don't hurry, it will tread on the heels of the *big* book next August. In the course of a week I can have most of the matter ready for you I think."²⁰ This sketch book was undoubtedly the sketch book that was eventually published in 1875, a book that was made up for the most part of sketches originally published in the *Buffalo Express*. Getting the sketches ready for the publisher was simply a matter of clipping and pasting those sketches that Clemens thought would appeal to the general reader. The sketch

19. Wecter, *Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks*, 143-144.

20. Unpublished letter to Elisha Bliss.

18. Unpublished letter to Elisha Bliss.

book published in 1893 similarly depended on the sketches originally published in the *Express*.

Thus, while he was postponing the publication of the "big book" to August, Clemens was devoting much of his time to other publishing projects, probably of lesser importance. All this is typical of the writer's willingness to assume new literary obligations even while he was having difficulty meeting old ones. A great deal of his time and energy went into the writing of long letters complaining about the heavy burdens he had voluntarily assumed. One of the projects that concerned him most in these days was the commercial newspaper edited for the American Publishing Company by his brother Orion after Clemens himself had declined the task. According to Clemens, the chief purpose in hiring Orion was to keep the popular author "from whoring after strange gods,"²¹ i. e., from signing up with other publishers. Bliss extracted a promise from Clemens that he would supply material for the publication, which was intended to give samples of the publishing company's forthcoming books as advertisement and as a means of helping salesmen to sell books before publication. When Clemens was unable to keep his promise, Orion and Bliss enraged him by reminding him of it. He wrote lengthy letters denying the allegation altogether and at the same time pleading that he be freed from his promise because he could not write humorous material under the circumstances at home and under such pressure from publishers and editors.

Three weeks after he wrote Bliss about the new sketch book, Clemens agreed to postpone the project because Bliss was unwilling "to throw the Sketch Book on the market and interfere with the Innocents." Perhaps Bliss was afraid that Clemens would not finish the manuscript of the new big book, since it looked as if he could

work up an interest in anything but *Roughing It*. (In fact that book was finished only by throwing the Sandwich Island letters, written in 1866, into the last quarter of the book.) In agreeing to postpone the sketch book, Clemens declared himself explicitly in favor of a time table, with "the big California and Plains book first of August, then the Diamond book first of March or April, 1872, and then the Sketch book the following fall."²²

Thus the book originally planned for January was postponed to August; and it was to be postponed even further. During the month of February Olivia's illness became an insupportable burden. On March 4th Clemens wrote to his brother Orion, "I am still nursing Livy night and day and cannot write anything. I am nearly worn out. We shall go to Elmira ten days hence (if Livy can travel on a mattress then), and stay there until I can finish the California book, say three months. But I can't begin work right away when I get there; must have a week's rest, for I have been through thirty days' terrific siege."²³ Nevertheless, on March 10th, he was tinkering with the first quarter of the book. As he had turned to Orion for help before on this part, so he now asked his brother to supply him with details he had forgotten. "Please sit down right away," he wrote, "and torture your memory and write down in minute detail every fact and exploit in the desperado Slade's life that we heard on the Overland and also describe his appearance and conversation as we saw him at Rocky Ridge station at breakfast. I want to make a telling chapter from it for the book — and will put it in the Publisher too as soon as the agents begin to canvass."²⁴ It is unlikely that Orion was able to oblige his brother, as the chapters that deal with Slade in *Roughing It* are derived from another source.

22. Unpublished letter to Elisha Bliss.

23. *Mark Twain's Letters*, I, 185.

24. Unpublished letter to Orion Clemens, in University of California Library.

21. Samuel Charles Webster, *Mark Twain, Business Man*, 116.

Apparently he was also planning to make a major revision in the parts he had already written, for he wrote to Orion that "right in the first chapter I have got to alter the whole style of one of my characters and re-write him clear to where I am now."²⁵ DeLancey Ferguson identifies this "character" as Orion, because "the only two characters who appear in the first chapter, and continue to appear, are the author himself and Orion." But the difficulty and the extensiveness of the task suggests that Mark Twain himself was the "character" being rewritten. Mark Twain is the *only* character of any importance to appear in the first chapter who continues to appear in the rest of the book. "It is no fool of a job," Clemens wrote, "but the book will be bettered by it." Probably the point to the change was that Mark Twain became the butt of the jokes. Had Orion been the character referred to, the job would not have been very difficult. Ferguson also errs in assuming that the letter was written from Elmira after the departure from Buffalo, whereas it was obviously written from Buffalo before the departure. The letter is dated Buffalo, 4th, 1871, and identifies the month thus: "We shall go to Elmira ten days hence."

Two weeks later, on March 17th, Clemens wrote to Bliss his final letter from Buffalo. "Out of the chaos of my household," he said, "I snatch a moment to reply. We are packing up tonight, and tomorrow I shall take my wife to Elmira on a mattress,—for she can neither sit up nor stand—and will not for a week or two. It is a great risk, but the doctor agrees that the risk is just as great to have her stay here and worry herself to death with two child-nurses whom she cannot look after and who neglect her sick child. In three whole months I have hardly written a page of manuscript. You do not know what it is to be in a state of absolute frenzy

—desperation. I had rather die twice over than repeat the last six months of my life."²⁶

The Clemenses left Buffalo on March 18, 1871. Clemens hastened to give up his editorship of the *Express* and his commitment to *Galaxy* magazine. He was now more interested in writing books for enormous profits than in editing a daily newspaper and a humorous column in a monthly magazine for a piddling few thousand dollars a year. He had put his house on Delaware Avenue on the market in early March. For six months it was advertised for sale on the front page of the *Express* as the home of S. L. Clemens and was finally sold in October at a loss of \$1,000. It had been bought for Olivia Langdon in December, 1870, for \$20,000, and it was sold to a Mrs. Smith for \$19,000.

In August he sold his interest in the *Express* to Col. George F. Selkirk at a loss of \$10,000. He was now ready to devote all of his time and energy to the new big book. He was through, he said, with periodical writing, which he now considered cheapening. "Haven't I risked cheapening myself sufficiently by a year's periodical dancing before the public?" he asked his brother.²⁷ The *Express*, which had noted his arrival in Buffalo with an editorial that fulsomely praised his predecessor, did not note his departure. Perhaps there had been a coolness between him and his co-workers on the *Express*. Perhaps his separation from the *Express* was so gradual that its completeness was not newsworthy. From Buffalo he went to Elmira and Hartford, to write *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Man Who Corrupted Hadleyburg*, *The Mysterious Stranger*, and *What is Man?* Buffalo, which had never really possessed him, lost him to the world. A piece of him, however, remained behind, the home at 472 Delaware Avenue, where he spent his honeymoon and where his first child was born. There he experienced, per-

25. *Mark Twain's Letters*, I, 186.

26. Unpublished letter to Elisha Bliss.

27. Unpublished letter to Orion Clemens.

haps, his greatest happiness and his greatest misery. There he wrote the best parts of *Roughing It* and the finest sketches in the 1875 and 1893 sketchbooks, and there

he may have begun *Tom Sawyer* and the other masterpieces which he eventually completed and published.

This I Remember – XX: I Become a Stage-Door Johnny

by Charles S. Illingworth

THAT year the Wilbur Opera Company played a summer engagement at the Star Theatre, our leading theatre, located on the corner of Pearl, Mohawk and Genesee Streets. This company played light operas such as "Bohemian Girl", "Mascotte", "Fra Diavolo", and other works of German, Austrian and French composers. Each week a different opera was presented.

One evening I was taken with father and mother, that was the start. It was wonderful. I was enchanted. It opened a new world.

The lilting music of the orchestra with violins, woodwinds, piano and drums playing impassioned waltzes, thrilling marches and lively polkas; the color of scenery and costumes; the glitter of footlights and spotlights and the male and female voices, solo or chorus, all combined to thrill and intoxicate me.

Then the inhabitants of this dream world, clad in spangles and tights, their features accented by make-up, standing in the glare of the spotlight, or marching and counter marching, their voices filling the auditorium with sound, the stage with movement. I was enraptured. For days I could think and talk of nothing else.

Finally I was given money to go to a matinee by myself.

During this engagement matinee seats were unreserved, first come, first served. I was among the first in line when the door opened, and joined in the rush for the first row, which I achieved.

Seated so close to the orchestra, I watched the bows rise and fall, saw the

fingers close the holes of the flute and clarinet, all the musicians seemingly indifferent to the wonderful melody they produced; all but the man at the piano, his head kept bobbing, and from time to time he would look at the violins or the brasses and drums. He was the musical director.

The theatre darkened, the footlights came on, the curtain rolled up, the music swelled in volume and there, strolling about the stage, were men and women singing. Being so close, I could see their black, brown or golden hair, their rosy cheeks, the dark eyes and crimson lips as they passed to and fro. Then a man in doublet and tights, a sword at his side, came to the footlights and sang alone, one hand on the sword hilt, the other gesturing.

Later a lady sang, her hands clasped before her, then they sang together, finally the chorus joined them, as in a burst of melody the curtain descended and. I breathed again.

Now I looked at my program. The man who sang was Jim Conley, the lady was Hattie Richardson. The musicians came out of the little door under the stage, followed by the director. Tall, broad shoulders, brown hair curled against his temples, a mustache with the ends curled, he took his place at the piano.

At a signal, he glanced to the left and right, raised his arms, the musicians had their instruments in position and at a nod of his head, poured forth the melody as the curtain went up on the second act. During this act, three ladies in military

costume faced the audience together and sang. The one on the left had black hair that curled about her ears and neck, her dark eyes glanced from side to side as her crimson lips parted, showing her white teeth and pink mouth as her deep contralto voice poured out the song.

Below the soldier's tunic, her legs were clad in tights and every curve of her calves, the smooth roundness of her knees and the swell of her thighs, impressed me deeply. To me she was the most beautiful girl in the world, I lost my heart completely.

The show continued, but my eyes followed only her until the finale, when the chorus lined up across the stage, the principals in front, my girl directly above me, the director, now standing, with arms outstretched, raised singers and orchestra in a crescendo of harmony as the curtain fell.

My whole life changed. All my thoughts and schemes revolved around the Star Theatre with its wonderful music, the musical director and my beautiful girl. I got money from father, begged money from mother, wheedled some from Maria Scobell, walked to save car fare, any way to get enough to buy a ticket to sit in the front row.

The next week I learned that "my girl's" name was Janette Palmer and the director's name was Frank Darling. I went so often that the box office man and the ticket taker recognized me and finally, one afternoon Frank Darling spoke to me when he took his seat to await the music cue. After that we often talked when the orchestra was not playing, and he suggested that when I could not get to a matinee, that I go to the Green Room to listen to the performance, if the door man stopped me tell him Mr. Darling sent me.

I don't know where I got the idea, but a week or so later I took a bottle of wine from the cellar, slipped it under my coat and went down town. The stage entrance was on Genesee Street. I went in, it was an open court, with windows of apart-

ments on each wall, then another door which opened onto back stage.

The man sitting on a chair just inside, asked me what I wanted, so I said, "Mr. Darling has sent me to the Green Room," and he let me pass.

I came to a large room with trunks, props, and chairs scattered about, and without speaking to anybody, sat down out of the way. I could hear the music and singing until the act ended. Then people came hurrying by, I recognized Jim Conley, James Coonly, Miss Richardson, Janette Palmer and others from the chorus. Some ran up an iron stairway, others went downstairs. Men in shirt sleeves shoved tall pieces of scenery into position.

Finally the performers started coming back, and standing around. One man asked me who I wanted to see and, not satisfied with my answer, called the stage manager. When he came, I pulled out the bottle of wine and showed it to him. I explained that Mr. Darling had told me I could hear the show from back-stage, but the wine was my own idea. One of the girls standing near said "Oh, I have seen him often, he sits down front, back of Frank." I told them my name, where I lived, how I loved music, and relinquished my hold on the bottle of wine.

Finally he told me I could stay, but would have to sit perfectly quiet, and showed me a chair where I could not only hear, but see part of the stage. While all this was going on, members of the company kept arriving, many of them joined the group around us.

Chorus men and girls in military coats, shakoes and white tights stood within arm's length, and I was astonished at the difference in their appearance across the footlights and close by.

The girls' hair was tucked under the shako, except for a few curls or bangs which framed their faces, grains of powder were visible on forehead, nose, neck and bare arms, lines of black and blue

paint bordered their eyes and each lash held a bead of black paint. A circle of bright red paint was on each cheek and their lips were crimson. Below their tunics, the smooth silk of tights accented the symmetrical curves of their broad thighs as they laughed and chatted. Never before had I been close to an actress in costume. I felt self-conscious but enthralled.

Then Miss Palmer came by. Beautiful, in spite of the make-up, wearing a blue tunic with gold frogs, her short black hair showed all around her shako, her big legs shapely in black tights, polished boots came half way up her calf. "What's going on?" she asked. "Just a boy, a friend of Frank's come back to see the show," someone answered, and she moved away.

The music started, someone called, "Places," and I sat alone and watched until it ended. Once the stage manager stopped and asked if I was enjoying it. "I love it," I answered, and he said "any time, any time," and went away. The opera was the "Black Hussar." So I went home and at supper told about being back stage, but I did not tell about the wine.

Between the acts of certain operas, living pictures were shown. About half way back on the stage, a gilded frame about twelve feet square was hung. Back of the frame was a portable platform about four feet above the floor. The rest of the stage was concealed by black drapes. Two girls, dressed as pages, stood in the center of the drapes, and upon signal, would draw them aside exposing the picture in the frame.

Four or five of the shapeliest girls of the company, clad in fleshings, (tights that cover the body from neck to feet, without ornamentation) would pose on the platform, within the frame, representing some famous painting by an old master. They would hold the pose, motionless, while the orchestra played soft music.

My favorite was called "Nymphs and Satyr," taken from the painting which hung over the bar at the Hoffman House

in New York. Naturally Miss Palmer was in it and during its showing the orchestra played "Narcissus". Even today the music recalls the picture.

One day when I went to the theatre there was no matinee, and the stage door-man suggested that, as some of the company was staying at the Barnes Hotel, I go over to see them.

The Barnes Hotel was a three-story brick building on Pearl Street, built against the Star Theatre. It was a theatrical hotel with two entrances on Pearl Street, the main entrance opening into the lobby with the desk near the door; beyond the desk, on the same side of the room, was the bar, so that the bar-keeper could officiate as desk clerk. Behind the barroom was the dining room. The other entrance opened into the stair-hall, which extended back to the dining room. On one side of the hall was a flight of stairs leading to the second and third floors. The partition which separated the hall from the bar had an opening cut into it at the hotel desk, so the clerk could serve both entrances. The hotel was owned and operated by Pete Barnes, a tall, fat man, with a cast in one eye, which made him appear cross-eyed.

Taking the door-man's suggestion, I went to Easter's on Main Street and purchased a box of candy, then back to the Barnes Hotel.

When I went in the hall entrance, Pete Barnes looked out of the opening, and I asked for Miss Palmer's room. Looking at the key board, he said she was in and gave me the number "Second floor on the side, you can't miss it". I climbed the stairs and saw the number, the door was ajar. "Come in," someone called when I knocked, and I stepped in.

Directly across from the door, in a rocking chair, was one of the chorus girls I recognized; to my right, seated in a platform rocker by the window was Janette Palmer. She had on a white skirt, possibly a petticoat, and a flowered dressing sac,

which she pulled together and fastened when she saw me. "Miss Palmer, I am Selkirk Illingworth, I have seen you so often, and like you so much that I wanted to bring you this candy," and I held out the box. With her black hair in curls, her dark eyes, red lips and lovely coloring, she looked more beautiful than when all made up.

"That's sweet of you, come and sit down," she answered, indicating a chair at her side. "This is ——," introducing the girl in the rocker, "And this is ——," and Snowball, you should recognize them from the show." The last two were sitting on the side of the bed, Snowball had her feet in a wash basin. "I'm always in hot water," she said, explaining that she was a toe dancer and had to do this every day. I cannot remember the names of the other girls in the room.

When I sat down they asked me if I enjoyed the shows, where I went to school, who else I knew in the company and other questions one would ask a boy when getting acquainted. I was surprised to learn that they had noticed me in the audience, and one girl spoke about my first visit back stage. I had an opportunity to say, "Miss Palmer, you are the first lady I ever saw in tights, I think you are beautiful."

Later one of the men from the company came in and said "We've got some beer in our room, would you girls like to come and have some." They asked me if I ever drank, and when I said "no," they told me to come to see them again and they would see me at the theatre. I went home, but I did not tell mother I had called on an actress.

I was astonished at the hotel room, it was worse than our maid's. Beside the two rockers mentioned, it had a straight chair, an oak dresser, and a yellow wood washstand, with a plain white toilet set, bowl and pitcher, the bed was white iron, chipped in places, with a woven wire spring.

I visited their room several other times during their engagement, and my recollection is they were always modest and circumspect, I never heard them swear and only one girl smoked, but of course I was an eleven-year-old boy, and that is how they treated me. It was a wonderful experience, I will always treasure the memory of the Wilbur Opera Company, and Janette Palmer, "my girl." Eighteen years later I met Frank Darling, when he was musical director of Ziegfeld Folies, and he remembered Wilbur Opera Days.

Books You May Want To See

The Rochester Gas & Electric Story. By ARTHUR KELLY. Rochester, Christopher Press, Inc., 1957.

Every business has a story but so many of them are never recorded. In some cases the telling comes too late as time takes its relentless toll of the men closest to the policies, the acts, and the decisions that made for success or failure. Facts have a way of becoming obscure, and, when not obscure, others need interpreting which often only conjecture can supply. In comparatively few cases can the

progress of a company be traced with benefit of diaries, biographical, and business notes, or the recollections of its more remote principals. Fortunate, indeed, is that concern whose annals can be rationalized and enriched by such material.

While much other data was helpful to the author of the *Rochester Gas and Electric Story*, it is clear that it owes a great deal of its interest, particularly for such readers as the members of our Society, to the fact that one man over a term of years took the trouble to assemble pertinent facts and, in ripe maturity, put them in orderly

[One Hundred Thirteen]

perspective. First employed in 1888, he became head of the electrical department and had the good fortune to live until 1954. He saw the electrical age begin in Rochester with power coming from those five dams on the Genesee that became available when Rochester yielded its supremacy in flour milling to Minneapolis. And over the years he saw and recorded the consequent lifting of "the burdens of millions of people" and "the vital impetus given to industrial progress". His detailed account of the development of electrical utilities in Rochester was published in newspapers and employee organs in 1936 after he had spent nearly fifty years in jobs that gave him a ring-side view of what was going on.

The author of the present booklet singles out this predecessor for praise that is well deserved. For the use of this important data undoubtedly contributed much to the unusual coherence that characterizes the electrical part of the story. Nor is romance lacking in the section dealing with the gas operations of the company. They began back in 1848 when a contract was signed for installing and maintaining fifty or sixty lamp posts and burners. It was more than a score of years before visitors to the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition were to be introduced to the use of gas as a cooking fuel. And thereafter housewives for years were reluctant to abandon their familiar wood, coal, and kerosene ranges. Some of the gas the company offered was produced by the coking process, which made possible a district steam heating service, said now to rank fifth in size in this country.

As is proper, the story isn't silent on the contribution this side line made to Rochester's reputation as a clean city. Again it was here that electrical wires were first put underground, and we are reminded that, with this start, our neighboring city now has more underground wiring than any comparable community. Of significant interest, too, is the tracing of the success-

ful campaign to return the enterprise to local control after that control had for a time been lost.

We get from this booklet a clear and attractive picture of a public utility operating in the best traditions of our private enterprise system. Its relations with suppliers, customers, employees, and community are all covered topically. There is adequate documentation, which, with the story itself, should recommend it to the attention of the business schools. It is to be hoped they won't miss this one.

Buffalo

FRANK W. COPLEY

Samuel P. Capen, 1878-1956. By JULIAN PARK. Pp. 58. *The University of Buffalo Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1, October, 1957. Fifty cents.

It is appropriate that a memoir of the late Dr. Samuel Paul Capen, Chancellor of the University of Buffalo from 1922 to 1950, should have been written by Julian Park, President of the Buffalo Historical Society and first Dean of the University's College of Arts and Science. As Dean of the College from its founding in 1913 to his retirement as Dean in 1954, he witnessed and participated in the whole of Chancellor Capen's notable achievement in university building. As University Historian, he has available the relevant documentation. As a personal friend and admirer of the former Chancellor, he is well qualified to paint a sympathetic portrait. He has, furthermore, rounded out his sketch by drawing upon the impressions and reminiscences of others who knew Dr. Capen well. The product makes no claim to be a definitive biography. It is a sketch of Dr. Capen's service to the University; it is a portrayal of the character, ideals, and personality of a remarkable man; it throws, incidentally, some interesting light on educational experiments at Clark University (where Dr. Capen began his career), on the early work of the United States Bureau (later

Office) of Education and the American Council on Education, and on the history of the University of Buffalo.

Perhaps the most remarkable episode in the story was Dr. Capen's decision to accept the proffered chancellorship. As former specialist in higher education in the Bureau of Education and as Director of the newly formed American Council on Education, he was probably the best informed man in the country on the subject of American colleges and universities. So great was his reputation that he had received, but only to reject, offers of the presidencies of several well established universities. Yet he let himself be persuaded to accept the headship of an institution which in 1922 can but be described as a university in name only — a collection of three or four vaguely connected and undistinguished professional schools and a College of Arts and Sciences housed in one antique building and just graduating its third class.

What were the attractions? The persuasive tongue of John Lord O'Brien should not be underestimated, but Mr. O'Brien really had something to sell. An important segment of Buffalo's population had decided that Buffalo needed a real university and had given substance to their resolve by contributing five million dollars in a recent campaign for that purpose. A suitable site had been secured and a building program launched. But the determining factor, it seems certain, was the willingness of a forward-looking University Council to give the new Chancellor a free hand in educational experimentation. Here was a fair, blank page on which the new head might write what he would. To a man with deep convictions on the need for new techniques in education this was an irresistible challenge. And so Samuel Paul Capen came to Buffalo.

Parts of his inaugural address of 1922 sound strangely contemporary to the ears of 1958:

The United States faces the need of a drastic and thorough-going reform of its whole scheme of education to the end that our children and our youth may be more effectively trained and that time may be saved in the process. The reform demanded does not consist of the mere readjustment of the mechanism of administration. It must go to the heart of the undertaking. It must deal with the content of subjects and courses.

The need that he urged most emphatically in that address and in the years that followed was the need for cultivating individual initiative and the capacity for independent study and research in undergraduate students. "None [of the students] should be allowed to graduate," he declared, "who have not demonstrated their capacity for independent study and registered definite mastery of some field of knowledge." This was to be quality education, more or less in the pattern of that in the English universities. Its embodiment at Buffalo was first the honors system in the College of Arts and Sciences, and a few years later, the tutorial system, under which all upperclassmen were expected to demonstrate their ability to carry an independent investigation. Unfortunately, this ideal was realizable only on the basis of a severe selective process after the sophomore year, and the necessary severity was precluded by considerations of public relations and finance. The tutorial system lived on in name long after its spirit had departed. Its aims were realized only in the cases of a talented minority of the undergraduates.

The more substantial achievements of the new Chancellor were in other directions. He brought about a genuine university organization where none had existed. He rescued the School of Medicine from the low estate into which it had fallen as a consequence of the Flexner Report, and initiated its transfer from its downtown site to the campus. He supported

[One Hundred Fifteen]

Dean Squire of the School of Dentistry in notable advances in dental education. He presided over the birth of a whole family of new schools — Education, Social Work, Business Administration, Millard Fillmore College (the evening division), Engineering, Nursing, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Through the last named and its predecessor, the Committee on Graduate Study and Degrees, he placed graduate work at the University on a gratifying high level. He sponsored experimentation in the College of Arts and Sciences which enabled talented students to complete the requirements for graduation in less than the traditional four years.

All of this adds up to the statement that in much less than thirty years Chancellor Capen's leadership (with generous support from the Council and the community) created a distinguished university where only the rudiments of one had existed. But those who, like Dean Park, had the good fortune to work under and with Dr. Capen remember him more for the intangibles than for the visible and tangible evidences of his achievement. Above all, perhaps, they remember him for his devotion to academic freedom. Upon this theme, observes Dr. Park, "he rang so many changes that certain of his friends began to think that whatever title he gave an address it would be sure to bring in, somewhere and somehow, academic freedom." And the principle that he so often praised he consistently practiced, sometimes under trying circumstances, so that the University of Buffalo gained an enviable reputation as an institution where thought and expression were free.

A man of broad culture, with an informed interest in such diverse subjects as music, literature, and biology, he could meet members of his different faculties on their own ground. At first acquaintance seemingly rather cold and austere, he became, as one got to know him, a sympathetic, warm, and friendly person, though

one who never compromised his dignity. A great man and a great educator, he left his mark not only on Buffalo but on American education as a whole. Dr. Park, in his sympathetic memoir, has done a service to Buffalonians and to all others who care about higher education in the United States.

Hood College

JULIUS W. PRATT

The Issue's Authors

The author of our longest article to date has the simplest biography. DR. MARTIN B. FRIED is Professor of English in the State University College for Teachers in Buffalo, and, except for two years with the Army Air Force in Europe, he has been teaching or preparing for teaching and scholarship. His degrees have been taken at his present college, at Harvard, and at the University of Chicago. He has taught at Hudson High School, Hudson, New York, and at Buffalo's South Park. After the war he went to Mohawk College, coming to Buffalo, we hope permanently, in 1948. Born in New York City, he has been a resident of Buffalo since 1919 and is a graduate of Hutchinson-Central High School.



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The Birge Story

by Frank W. Copley and W. H. Glover

ON the twenty-fourth day of September 1834, a young man in his late twenties, just arrived via the Erie Canal from Schenectady, signed the register of the Eagle Tavern in Buffalo. He required a room and asked about the earliest boat to Chicago whither, it appeared, he was bound. The proprietor, Harrington by name, read the entry, Martin H. Birge, Middlebury, Vermont, and, being himself from Burlington, shook the newcomer's hand with something more than professional warmth. And as men will who find they hail from the same state or the same town they fell into a friendly conversation, out of which came a suggestion that, considering the reports of malaria in Chicago, the three days before the next sailing could well be spent in looking over the local prospects for a retail store such as Birge planned to establish. Little was it realized that on that hurried survey hinged the loss or gain to the little frontier community of eleven thousand souls of what was to become an important industry and one destined to a long and successful operation. Birge soon became convinced that a change in his plans was called for on the strength of the opportunities for growth that his experience as a merchant envisioned here and we find him checking out of the Eagle on the 27th bound by stage coach for New York to buy his opening stock of merchandise. Chicago's loss was Buffalo's gain.

When it comes to dealing with the earlier years of a business institution, writers always feel at one with honest Izaak Walton who long since expressed the wish in the preface to his *Lives of the Poets* that "these men had also writ their own lives". Poets fare better in these days

of great biographical activity than they did in Walton's time, but the advice is still sound for industrial concerns that facts be set down as they occur before those who know best about them pass from the scene. With Martin H. Birge there can be no quarrel on this score, for almost at century's close we find him yielding to the persuasions of his juniors and setting down in order what he remembered about his early life, his education and subsequent business career. "Being now", he writes in a set of pencilled notes now yellowed with the years, "in the ninetieth year of my age and solicited by many friends I make the following brief statement". It lists the military service of his grandfather, David, of Litchfield, Connecticut, and that of his father, Elijah, an officer in the War of 1812, the date of his own birth, July 30, 1806, and the place thereof, Underhill, Vermont. District school and academy shape and develop his mental powers with three years of teaching added. We see him as a clerk in Bowen's Store in Middlebury at a salary of sixty dollars per annum, his first duty in the morning serving spirits by the glass over the counter to such as came early for their bitters. There were twenty-two stores in the town and they all followed the same practice, he reports. An early joiner of a Temperance Society, he switches soon to employment at an increased salary in another store, whose proprietor engages to run a dry establishment once present liquid inventory is exhausted, "a promise which I think he kept", writes Martin. He proceeds, "On April 1, 1829 I commenced business on my own account and opened the first temperance store I had ever heard of, and think the earliest established in that state,

[One]

which soon became very popular and successful." Trips to New York to purchase stock are recounted. The salesmen of that day of long ago are not backward with invitations to the theatre, a good show at the Park, and a proffered cigar, which Martin has not the courage to decline. "I dropped it in a careless manner", he writes, "the only cigar I have ever handled". Business thrives and the original investment of two hundred and fifty dollars is run up to four thousand five years later when there comes to him a desire to see the west. He sells, splits the proceeds with his father and, as we have seen, abandons at Buffalo his plans about Chicago, as a result of the impression made on him in a few brief days by the Niagara Frontier.

It must indeed have been a bustling place, this Buffalo of a century and a quarter ago. In twenty years it had grown from the two houses left standing by the British to a population of ten or eleven thousand. And in the single year following Birge's arrival it jumped fifty percent to a figure of 15,621, if we are to take the word of the Directory published in June 1835. "There are but few towns", the editor writes, "which can boast a more fitting location with respect to the conveniences of commerce and its connection with all the most important markets of the Union, and its consequent facilities for gathering together and transmitting to each the rich and needful products of the eastern and the western world as the City of Buffalo; and its growth has been the most rapid, permanent and splendid of any on record". In twelve years the population was to double and the little store at 234 Main Street that opened for business on October 15, 1834, was to enjoy the advantages of a growing market from its founding days on.

The stock consisted of dry goods, wall paper and general merchandise. The wall paper was a novelty line and the notes mention one supplier, Smith and Howland of Troy, who had dealers in all important

lake ports, and who furnished him a product made by pasting together printed or stenciled square sheets so as to form a continuous roll. From New York importers he brought in supplies of paper made in England, where the art of block printing had reached perfection, for all of which Martin was successful in finding a ready market. But in 1837 came a national depression of such proportions as to encourage many to seek protection in bankruptcy. It caught the young concern with twenty-two thousand dollars on the books which was uncollectible. His own obligations, however, he would not default and "consequently", he writes, "it took me ten full years of hard labor to clear off my old indebtedness". He continues, "in 1846 I sold out my dry goods stock and devoted my attention to paper hangings, wholesale and retail". He gives no reason for this decision, so important to the later development of his enterprise. However, he refers to his wall paper department as the first in the city. It had been successful and warranted expansion and an undivided attention which the liquidation of less promising lines would allow. And so, if we may say that his first important decision was to start business in Buffalo, his second was this move to concentrate on paper.

The general store first located at 234 Main Street in 1844 moved to number 144 on the same street and again, in the year in which all lines except paper hangings were dropped, to 160 Main Street. Two competitors were close neighbors, N. Wilgus at 221 and Wattles and Hamlin at 198. In 1850 when the first advertisement is noted in the Directory, we find Martin H. Birge listed as Manufacturers' Agent, Paper hangings, at 174 Main, just a few doors away from the older location. Here the busy enterprise continued until after the Civil War when there were further moves first to 218 and in 1871 to 248-50 Main. Five moves in forty years certainly reflect activity and a readiness to grasp any opportunities that presented them-

selves for bettering display facilities and increasing sales. The last one noted doubled the floor area and was to provide office space after manufacturing operations were begun in 1878. Thus in the absence of sales records for this stretch of over forty years, it seems evident that despite depressions in the fifties and early seventies, and despite the Civil War the business was making a steady if not spectacular growth. It is interesting to note moreover that business was not entirely of a local character as is attested in the annals of the Civil War. The lengthy siege of Vicksburg finally brought about a shortage of newsprint in that city and in 1864 the enterprising publisher of its newspaper printed an issue on rolls of paper, furnished by Birge, an end use beyond the dreams of the liveliest imagination.

Two years after coming to Buffalo Martin had married the daughter of Phineas Kingsley of Sheldon, Vt. at about which time he presented his letter to the First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo in which he continued an honored member for over sixty years. Two sons soon enlarged the family, both of whom received their degrees from Cornell. George K. Birge was of the Class of 1872 and Henry M. a year later. In the late sixties and early seventies both are listed as clerks in their father's establishment which in 1875 changed its style to M. H. Birge Sons & Co. Just three years later when the fourth member of the firm dropped out we find the listing M. H. Birge & Sons, Manufacturers. Forty-four years had thus seen a little retail establishment through intelligent and imaginative direction make such a success as to warrant entry into the field of manufacturing as well as through wise conservation of assets, to provide the funds for that important move.

Before we enter on this later period, however, it seems appropriate to take a look at the industry of which Birge was now becoming an important part. What were the means taken in past ages to create

the pleasing interior effects that man has always apparently desired? What has been paper's part in this evolution that began centuries before there was paper?

Bare walls have always seemed to annoy members of the human race as attested by records stretching back to the Stone Age. The attempts at decoration have run the full gamut from the crudest graffito to the murals of the Renaissance. On walls long buried under the dust of centuries simple inscriptions and drawings of men and animals, besides informing us of the lives of our remote ancestors, show us how they went about relieving the effects of dull interiors. Egypt had its carvings and paintings. A Roman soldier spending the night in a rude stone hut scratches the legend on its walls, "Vibius hic dormivit", (Vibius slept here). Thus he beguiled the dragging hours. In about the same period the poet² Horace contrasts walls inlaid with ivory in the homes of wealthy friends with those of more modest dwellings. In the Far East the walls of the palace of Kublai Khan at Chandu were, according to Marco Polo, "all gilt and painted with the figures of men and beasts and birds, with a variety of trees and flowers, all executed with such exquisite art that you regard them with delight and astonishment". But aside from drawings, carvings, mosaics and paintings, decorative, as well as insulative, effects have through the ages been secured through the use of animal skins and textiles. Sometimes these were hung directly on the walls, sometimes at a little distance, so as to provide a passageway or recess. It was behind an arras hung like this that Polonius hid and through which the rapier of Hamlet found its victim. Of course, the arrangement helped make the draughty rooms of palaces cozy though there was

1. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* IV 2146 "Hic Vibius Restitutus dormirit suam urbanam desiderabat".

2. *Odes*, Book II, XVIII.

some incidental encouragement to intrigue and murder.

Now it was not for reasons of safety that paper eventually came into employment as a wall covering, but rather for its availability, its relatively low cost and the novelty of effect thereby made possible. As might be expected, we hear of it first in China, where paper money is thought to have been the medium of exchange as early as the ninth century. Four hundred years later currency made of paper from the mulberry tree was in circulation throughout the dominions of Kublai Khan. And this circumstance of its having been a government monopoly may explain why there seems to be no trace of wall paper as such much, if any, earlier than the sixteenth century. And it was at any rate late in that century, that Europe first became aware of the new medium through importations made from that country. They came on sailing ships for a century, these papers so curiously wrought and designed and in time became the patterns of much of the finer work of western designers.

From the perspective of time it appears that paper was in a good competitive position from the very start. The cost of tapestries was beginning to become prohibitive. Painted walls were available, but here was a medium that offered greater variety of texture as background together with a freer play in imaginative design. It could produce on the eye an impression of greater crispness or gaiety, or, if desired, of the warmth and softness associated with textiles. It was, too, ideally adapted to the new art of printing. But it caught on slowly and not until 1630 did they begin producing a hand painted wall paper in Rouen. Perhaps it was but natural that, for years thereafter, instead of striking out boldly to develop the full potentialities of the new material, manufacturers clung to tradition striving for effects that would simulate those of tapestries. At any rate it was a little over a century later before

block printing was done on wall paper, again in France. Then it was and not earlier that the modern industry was born. The product of French factories won both wide and rapid acceptance from this time on. By the time of the French Revolution Réveillon at Paris was supplier to Louis XVI and his ill-fated queen, and what Carlyle described as "the immense magazines of velvet paper of this extensive manufacturer of the Rue Saint Antoine" were early victims of the mob, the proprietor seeking safety in the Bastille which was located on the same street. Carlyle continues, "was the Sieur Réveillon heard to say that a journeyman might live handsomely on fifteen sous a day? Some seven pence half penny: 'tis a slender sum. Or was he only thought and believed to be heard saying it?" The end result was unfortunately the same, and we mention the episode not alone for its historical interest as concerns the industry, but to illustrate the great strides it had made in four decades or so. Here was an artisan brought on his merits and the rising fortunes of his industry to aristocratic status in a few short years. England meantime began to produce and very fine work was turned out at Chelsea and elsewhere.

The first paper hung on our side of the Atlantic came on sailing ships from China, but by the middle of the eighteenth century imports from European factories largely took over the market with Fleeson at Philadelphia, just in operation, fighting for a place in the sun. Of course, the product that we have discussed thus far has not been the roll that we know, but single sheets that could be painted, stamped or fed by hand through flat bed presses. The first import of paper in rolls did not come until about 1790 and the rolls were formed by pasting together lengthwise twelve sheets which each measured twenty-two by thirty-three inches. During the next forty or fifty years the art of printing paper from wooden blocks reached perfection and the fine old im-

ports so widely used at the turn of the century fell into relative disfavor, with the cheaper product, as so often happens, making marked headway at the expense of the dearer. It was at this point that the Birge name became associated with the industry through the establishment of the little retail store on Main Street. Like other industries which entail the work of creative artists, as time goes on and standards of taste change, there come periods when the new surfeits and relief is sought in the old. It is in such cases important that the background of the past be provided if one is to follow intelligently the surges of taste and the consequent changes in policy that the hundred years and more just past have witnessed.

What had really happened by the time of Birge's founding was that wall hangings had been made available for the modest householder. Three hundred years earlier in the time of Francis I, those tapestried walls described by Rabelais (*Gargantua*, Ch. 60) as in every chamber of the manoir of Theleme with changes for each season of the year, were beyond the reach of any but the extremely rich. A hundred years later some progress had been made in widening the market and a Parisian of modest means could buy in one of the gallery shops surrounding the cemetery of the Innocents imitation tapestries of cardboard and stained paper (*les plaisantes tapisseries de carte et de papier noirce*) of which you may read in the verse of Claude Le Petit. In the next two centuries the market widened still further as new methods were introduced and the lower price of the product attracted the interest of every man. His eyes opened gradually to the blessings and happiness that can come from a contemplation of art in his daily life and a growing industry had made it possible for him to satisfy this yearning at a cost he could afford. Wall paper was now available on Main Street.

Martin Birge with forty-four years of successful experience in Buffalo as a re-

tailer and wholesaler of wall paper undoubtedly foresaw a further increase in demand in the years ahead. The country was growing and the community was growing. Moreover his convictions as to the competitive advantages of paper had been strengthened and with it his optimism for the future. But he had reached the age of seventy-two and we wonder whether he would, on his own initiative, have decided to risk his accumulated capital in a turn to manufacturing. It seems more likely that the pressure for such a step came from his sons who had now, as we have seen, been for some years associated with him in the business. Nonetheless, the decision rested with him and, as on other occasions that we have noted, having studied the problem and reached an affirmative conclusion, he lost no time in putting it into effect. It will bear repeating that, but for this marked ability of his to analyze, to reach sound conclusions and to act accordingly and without delay, the later scope of the enterprise would have been a restricted one and its life in all probability a shorter one. But that other contingencies were well provided for was itself of major importance. Both sons, as we have seen, graduated from Cornell, both showed an early interest in music. And George, while in college, played the organ and wrote the lyrics to the song, "Cornell", which was so popular as to require a reprinting in his senior year. It was sung, curiously enough in view of his father's aversion to tobacco, to the tune of a college song then popular "The Last Cigar". Henry, although also in his father's firm, a little later turned his musical interests into other commercial channels and took an agency in Australia for the sales of pianolas. The venture was quite successful and after his return to Buffalo we find him in 1896 the occupant and owner of 477 Delaware Avenue, later the John Miller Horton home and now the chapter house of Katherine Pratt Horton Chapter of the Daughters of The American

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Revolution. On the other hand the elder son, George, was prepared to make the wallpaper business his career and in it he was already well along at the time the factory was started at the corner of Perry and Indiana. We have mentioned this interest in the fine arts on the part of a rising figure in the company, because as applied to design and color it undoubtedly had a considerable bearing on the direction the new factory took. It would have been easy to follow the trend and concentrate on the cheaper reproductions then and since enlisting the major interest of many concerns in the trade. But from the very start of operations there is evidence of a determination to put the emphasis on imaginative and creative work as will be seen in the very lay-out of the new plant and in more detail as we move along.

The factory was housed in a five-story building extending two hundred feet along Indiana and fifty feet along Perry, with an area of approximately fifty thousand square feet. On the first floor was the steam power plant with its two boilers and seventy-five horsepower engine, together with stock and shipping areas. Just above was the first of two pressrooms with its battery of eight cylinder presses. On the third floor some of the finer work was turned out, its equipment including an embossing and a bronzing machine for the production of gold, silver and embossed papers. Here were also located the block presses, the engraving department and those hard maple blocks, twenty by twenty-four inches and two inches thick which bring back to us memories of a past age. The fourth floor was divided into a drying room and the area where coloring machines applied the base color to paper which after drying went to the printing presses. And on the top floor was another press room which produced patterns for the price-conscious trade. For its time it was a well balanced operation. It could produce about anything then required in

the wallpaper trade and was capable of handling such innovations as the years just ahead were likely to present. Employees numbered about a hundred and thirty, a great many of whom were in skilled trades — pressmen, engravers, embossers, operators of hand presses together with an artist or two.

Well, there was the physical plant as it started operations eighty years ago in a community where it was a pioneer in its line of business. Think for a moment of the difficulties that faced the Messrs. Birge and Superintendent Humphrey in recruiting a factory organization in a city where probably not a single man with experience in a wallpaper factory was to be found. They had two choices, and only two; hire inexperience and depend on training, or go far afield, if necessary, in order to get men who knew something about the machines they were to run and the hand crafts to which others were to be assigned. They chose wisely to follow the second course, bringing into the organization at great expense men skilled in the various operations from other centers of the industry both in this country and abroad. It cost more at the time, but it put them years ahead in reaching the quality standards they had set up as their goal. This policy is worth more than passing notice because it was a continuing policy to be abreast of industry developments wherever they occurred and to keep a sharp eye out for men who could supply the technical knowledge necessary in respect of such as fitted into the Birge program. It is interesting to note that the grandsons of some of these skilled recruits of yesteryear are with the firm today, helping materially, as did their sires, to secure and maintain Birge's leadership in the field of finer papers.

With a good nucleus of customers the new factory apparently got off to a very good start avoiding many of the headaches that even today mar the early months of beginning operations. But in the course

of a year or two an unexpected misfortune struck suddenly in the form of a disastrous fire. Nowadays with modern sprinklers and extinguishers this hazard in the pressrooms of the country is pretty well controlled. But eighty years ago fires could easily get out of hand as did the one on December 17, 1880, which started on the third floor near the bronzing operation and then spread to upper and lower floors with great rapidity. There was barely time to move finished stock on the ground floor to the Main Street store. All goods in process were soon a total loss. Buildings, machinery and fixtures suffered severe damage from fire and water.

For some days the disaster was front page news and from the *Buffalo Commercial* we learn that some nine persons lost their lives including two who jumped from an upper window, to avoid the flames. The seven bodies, charred beyond recognition, were placed in rosewood caskets, removed to St. Joseph's Cathedral and placed in the center aisle with lighted tapers at either end. During the Requiem Mass and sermon by the Bishop many stood, so filled was the Cathedral. The newspaper records state that "twenty-eight boys who were employed by the Messrs. Birge before the disaster acted as bearers and wore white crepe on one arm. After final absolution the service ended; the seven caskets were borne to a large double team sleigh heavily draped with black and white, the bearers, mourners and friends entered covered sleighs and the long and singular cortege moved slowly to Limestone Hill where the interment took place. Many of those who accompanied the remains to their final resting place suffered much from the cold". With the temperature at 4°F this can well be believed. As to the fire itself, it is said to have been "the first wallpaper manufactory of any size ever so destroyed in this country". It is also referred to as the first fire in Buffalo to which a paid fire department responded.

The next year manufacturing was re-

sumed at the corner of Seventh and Maryland and ads of the time show a cut of the factory buildings and list the products as machine made wall and window paper and borders, hand made hangings, frieze, dado and ceiling decorations. It was in this period that Birge initiated the practice that later became general of offering wallpaper in sets consisting of complete covering for walls, ceiling and dado. In 1885 the office was moved to the factory with the Main Street store continuing as a retail outlet until 1891 when distribution became exclusively wholesale. Birge velours were being heralded as providing "the decorative effects of figured plush or colored stucco". This was apparently coincident with the installation of a new machine for processing flock papers. It was designed by George K. Birge and performed its functions so well that equipment of a similar nature is still employed today, a good seventy years later. It represented a major advance in that it eliminated the hand work that had been associated through the centuries with the production of flock papers, an item in the trade of very durable popularity.

But flocks and leathers and prints went up in flames a second time on December 11, 1894, in a conflagration from which only the office building on the corner was saved. The alarm came at nineteen minutes past four in the morning when a patrolman noticed flames through a basement window in an area just checked by a watchman. From there it spread rapidly and by nine o'clock the entire factory area was burned out. The *Buffalo Commercial* dwelt at length on "the fascinating brilliancy of the flames as they leaped high in the air and lighted up the neighborhood". It commented in wonder at "the red cinders which rose and fell in pyrotechnic splendor". There was mention of a similar fire a year earlier at the William Campbell establishment in New York City, which a little later became a branch of the so-called "trust". But what was

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more important was a little paragraph which described how, while the fire was still burning, an architect was at work examining walls and foundations and how Henry Birge was arranging for an inspection of the boilers the following day. As a result of this spirit of drive, two days later it was thought at least partial operations could be resumed early in the following February. Another item of major historical importance is the paper's listing of the number of employees as four hundred. We may thus conclude that in the fourteen years since the earlier fire when one hundred and thirty-five employees were reported, the business had tripled in size.

Times were bad following the panic of 1893 and the price level plunged to depths unimaginable to those for whom history began with World War I. As a relief from the ruinous price structure, so-called trusts had been formed and were still being formed. The matter of retarding the spread of these large combinations in various industries was supposed to be provided for in the Sherman Act of 1890 but in its earlier years enforcement was perfunctory at best and the move toward greater concentration of industrial power went merrily on. In retrospect the process appears as a natural development and one well designed to keep pace with the country's phenomenal growth. One wonders what would have been the outcome in the two major wars that were soon to follow had not the productive forces of the nation been marshaled into larger units than prevailed in our earlier years.

The wallpaper industry happened to be one in which such a combination was sought. Some units of the trade joined forces with National Wallpaper Company, the trust, with alacrity. Others, including Birge, who felt like leaving well enough alone, preferred to follow the independent course which over the years had brought them marked success. It must be admitted, however, that in such cases the pres-

sure to join was only increased, with M. H. Birge and Sons in 1895 reluctantly becoming a branch of National. The founder, Martin H. Birge, approaching ninety had retired in 1892 and under the new set-up the two sons, George and Henry, were in charge of local operations. The combination, however, comparatively late in its formation, became the object of the first court action under the Sherman Act with Samuel Untermeyer, for a fee of \$40,000.00 appearing as counsel for the local interests. The verdict went to the government and Birge happily was again a Buffalo owned and operated institution.

In his remaining years of well-earned retirement the figure of its nonagenarian founder in frock coat with his silk hat and gold headed cane was a familiar sight in those parts of the city where his chief interests lay. Serene in the knowledge that an able successor was at the helm, he could be confident about the company's future as his daily visits to its offices continued for as long as his strength allowed. It was in this period that he penned the autobiographical notes, referred to earlier in this paper, toward the close of which his thoughts turned rather to the future than to the past. He spoke of having kept his temperance pledge, of having abstained from tobacco and of having long since given up going to the theatre, hoping the telling would prove helpful to the younger men who were to follow him. By this we think he meant to emphasize the importance of having convictions and sticking tenaciously to them. For adherence to principle was a marked characteristic of this former Vermont farm boy who had built up an important business, and by bringing tasteful wall decoration within the reach of the most modest purse, had been a dispenser of happiness in his day and generation.

The company became a corporation on August 23, 1900, a matter of six weeks prior to the death of its founder, which occurred on October fourth of the same

year. Its president was George K. Birge, who had already for a score of years been active in managing its affairs. He was a man of such considerable parts that the character of M. H. Birge & Sons Company at the turn of the century can perhaps best be determined by a recital of some of his business and community activities. He lived in Circle House at Richmond Avenue and the Circle and from its driveway his horse drawn cutter and family sleighs entered the avenue for those bracing drives that were so pleasant a feature of our Buffalo winters of a half century ago.

At about the time of the National Wallpaper merger, George N. Pierce, a manufacturer of bicycles, was desirous of entering the automobile field. Mr. Birge lent him the necessary funds and from then on had a second major business interest. By 1908 he was president of George N. Pierce Co. which became Pierce-Arrow two years later of which he continued as chief executive officer until he sold out his interest to New York bankers in 1916. In the light of later events it appears he took his substantial profit at the right time; for the failure of Pierce-Arrow twenty-two years later constituted perhaps our greatest local industrial tragedy. They built a high-quality car styled after French models and in their later years found ruinous competition from the cheaper production line product.

Of course, the Pierce-Arrow connection did not mean any lessening of Mr. Birge's interest in the wallpaper business. Somehow this meticulous man of urbane manners found it possible to direct the destinies of two important concerns simultaneously. Moreover, he found time on the side to indulge his taste for European travel in a manner befitting his business connections. For one such trip a special touring landau had been built at his direction complete with "collapsible running boards, baggage rack with room for dishes and a lavatory with running water". It was on journeys like this that he laid the

foundation for an export business, interviewed skilled artisans interested in emigration, and eyed closely any new patterns, new methods or new developments in the wallpaper trade abroad.

The Pan-American Exposition in 1901 had him on its board and the minutes of the Birge director's meeting in January of that year record a discussion about having an exhibit. An affirmative decision was reached and as visitors to the fair in due course passed a columnar entrance in the Spanish Mission, they could observe the block printing process going on before their eyes. In a contemporary booklet the display was thus described. "A printer is here printing wallpaper with an engraved block of wood in a heavy press. A boy spreads the color on a cloth pad. The printer dips his block in the color and carefully swings it over the open roll of paper, then steps on the lever of the press and throws just the right weight on the wooden beam. The block is held an instant on the paper, then the lever released. The block swings back to the color pad and the operation completed". It was in this Spanish Mission that Mr. Birge was host at a luncheon for twenty, with President McKinley the honored guest, on the day before the assassination.

With leadership such as George K. Birge provided the growth of the Birge business from the turn of the century to World War I was conspicuous. In August 1910 the capital stock was increased from \$150,000 to \$500,000. A New York City branch office had been established in 1903 in the Johnston Building at Broadway and Twenty-Eighth Street and business in Chicago and Philadelphia soon reached such proportions as to warrant branch offices in each of these cities. There was, too, a London office reflecting Mr. Birge's European contacts and those of his son, Humphrey, who established it in 1906. Humphrey Birge became a director and vice-president in March 1910, and devoted much of his attention up to the outbreak

of the war to the building up of the company's export business. At the same meeting Howard Heston was elected a director and named secretary, A. B. Humphrey continuing as treasurer, in which capacity he had served since 1901. Thus was the organization strengthened to meet the problems of a war-torn world and thus the lines of an orderly succession laid down to meet such contingencies as might arise. From 1914 on there was increasing concern about fuel and supplies with a government order in February 1918 requiring a twenty-five percent reduction in operations. And then in the same month in which these more acute wartime problems presented themselves, the master of Circle House, who had turned his father's retail store into an established manufacturing enterprise and who had headed Pierce Arrow in the days when ten thousand men were numbered on its payroll, left the scene of his earthly labors. He may well have been, as contemporaries sometimes called him, the best business man Buffalo ever knew.

In more than eight decades the company had had but two directing heads, father and son. Now it was time for the grandson to take over in a trying period. The nature of the wallpaper business does not make it naturally germane to war and to war effort and the policy seemed wise of digging in and living as best could be done until arms should again be laid aside. The out of town sales offices were closed for the duration and the London branch was made a wholly owned subsidiary in 1919. At the same time there was an evident look forward in the eighty-one new patterns in the 1918 line and the plans in 1920 for a new office building at the corner of Niagara and Maryland. At war's end further changes in the organization made Humphrey Birge, Chairman, Langdon B. Wood, President, Howard Heston, Vice President and Secretary, E. M. Stroman, Vice President and D. T. Dunbar, Treasurer.

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The whole period from 1918 to 1937 has been described as embracing some of the best and some of the worst years the wallpaper industry has seen. Within those months were registered heights and depths of demand and of the price structure such as industry rarely faces. But through it all Birge went on facing each problem as it arose. Was there business to be had in South America? Birge would gladly furnish paper appropriate to the drawing rooms of Rio or the remote hacienda. Were buyers of paper increasingly critical about whether or not colors would fade? There was a new device, the Fadometer, on the market which would measure accurately color permanence. Birge would have one and use only inks proven superior in that regard. Were shoppers heard frequently commenting that baby's finger prints could be simply sponged off painted walls? Well, fortunately by 1928 technological progress had made both fast-to-light color and waterproof paper available, and a very important advance had been scored. When cheaper paper made inroads on the quality product, Birge even leased the Janeway plant at New Brunswick, hoping thereby to get a respectable share of the business in the low-price field. By having two distinct plants, each with its specialty, it was felt at the time to be a good move. However, experience soon disclosed the incompatibility of the two lines. The Janeway plant was relinquished rather promptly and the onward march resumed under the single standard of quality.

You thumb through scrapbooks covering those years in which from day to day clippings and other memoranda have been carefully preserved. And you cannot fail to get a sense of feverish activity as you note the curiosity about what is going on everywhere and the free use of the imagination directed toward the growth of the business. The trade and the public are increasingly color conscious. Newspapers discover that wallpaper is newsworthy and

discuss with becoming gravity the proper predominant shade for one's walls when the daughter is expecting a proposal of marriage. They raise the question and then advance the theory that wallpaper design should fit one's personality with the implication that what is good for the blonde is poison to the brunette. But through it all you can see a growing desire for more and better patterns, from a public more alert to artistic values and well conditioned by both improved advertising copy and the philosophy of the interior decorator. It has long been the practice in the trade to issue new lines of patterns at regular intervals. They may not attract the attention of the general public as do the new automobile models, but on their acceptability a season's business at least may depend. And, of course, the selection of these designs is particularly important in periods when the public seems unusually averse to mural adventure.

When such changes are under consideration the famous Birge collections of historic paper patterns and of embossed leathers, the latter assembled by the first George K. Birge, prove of very practical worth. Both collections are kept up to date, so that the final choices, whether traditional or modernistic, will have been made in the light of adequate comparison with the best work of the past. In that part of the plant devoted to the draughting of the new designs you would have found among the artists back in the twenties a young man named Charles Burchfield, whose present recollections of those days have been both helpful and delightful. To him and his fellow artists were assigned subjects for pictorial development and their brushes produced the painted sketch which the engraver would then follow. A simple task, you say, and in some cases, such as those based on a scrap of paper recovered from the walls of a colonial house, there was much of copying involved. But up comes just an idea or perhaps a cutting from a bit of leather

paneling, and the painting of it within the color limitations of your presses will challenge all your artistic skills. From the painting that you turn out, after color separation, engraved plates will be made, one for each color. And in due course, if you have done your work well, the effects of the old leather, the tapestry or the precious paper patterns with which you started will be faithfully reproduced and authentic designs of the past and new ones, too, will bring joy to many households. Can you conjure up for a budding artist a more attractive environment? It makes one think of the youthful days of Leonardo in that shop in Florence, filled with its beautiful objects. In due course artist and employer went their several ways but both have continued to this day their common quest for beauty. It led the artist to international recognition and notable honors including the most recent one, the award to him of our society's Red Jacket Medal.

There were already warlike rumblings in Europe when there was called to the company's helm a young man in his late twenties, the great grandson of its founder. George K. Birge, named for his grandfather, had been born in 1909 in London during one stay of his parents in that capital. He had prepared at Nichols and topped off his formal education at Babson Institute. His first assignment in the company had been to the cost department and now the active direction of the business was in his hands. The system of communication with the trade and public seems first to have engaged his attention with monthly messages now being addressed to all dealers and occasional radio broadcasts being made of important developments. In his first New Year's Card the new president described the continuing policies that had guided the institution for one hundred and four years as "Quality first, fair prices, honest dealings with the trade and a sincere desire to earn the respect and confidence of customer and competitor alike". To meet the challenge of the

unsettled state of business prevailing, it was felt a general program of reorganization and rehabilitation was essential and on it the company was already embarked when we entered World War II. While this program was interrupted during the war years, operations continued profitable even though they necessarily suffered curtailment. In this period Mr. Birge served on Industry Advisory Committee of the War Production Board as well as a term as president of the Wallpaper Institute.

While serving in this capacity, the Institute and Mr. Birge were named defendants in an anti-trust suit alleging an agreement to eliminate certain commissions which, though long current in the trade, had resulted in a retail mark-up that placed wallpaper at a competitive disadvantage with other media. The system really involved a sort of double discount, both to dealer and hanger, that was rough on the consumer, and accordingly, restrictive in respect of paper distribution. Notwithstanding the laudable motive of the alleged agreement, the action was pressed and the defendants elected not to contest. A consent decree was thereupon entered under the terms of which the members of the Institute, while forbidden to set retail prices or limit commissions, were at liberty to name a maximum price to be charged by the distributor.

Furthering the policy of reorganization on which Mr. Birge had embarked, Warren Piaget was brought into the company and served as Executive Vice-President from 1946 until his untimely death in 1952. He had a way of inspiring those about him and a rare judgment of men, as is attested by those of his selection who have since risen to positions of great responsibility. In the field of merchandising, it was largely due to his initiative that the daring step was taken of discontinuing the sale of wallpaper under distributors' brands, although such sales then accounted for sixty percent of total volume. It was a move which paid off handsomely with

sales doubling after four years. In the field of packaging, the age-old practice of wrapping fifty rolls to a bundle yielded to the thirty-two roll carton which saved time and afforded better protection to the contents.

And in the factory itself many changes were being made, with the well-equipped machine shop overhauling such machines as needed attention. Those worn out or obsolete were disposed of and replacements or new items were provided where needed. But the biggest project in this program of modernization was the installation of a high temperature drying system in a long room through which passes in great festoons the paper fresh from the twelve-color rotary presses. At the other end of the room it emerges with inked surfaces rub-proof, much time saved and a bottleneck of production eliminated.

These various advances, as well as others on which a start had been made, were not allowed to lapse when M. L. Pemble with a background of chemistry and experience with Imperial was named Executive Vice-President in 1952. It had long been the practice in the trade to issue new lines at two-year intervals. On certain of these patterns, initial orders would be heavy and on them production would be stepped up. But a fickle popular taste might not in all cases support the choices of the distributor with the result that both manufacturer and distributor frequently found themselves loaded with slow moving merchandise. Then, too, the scheme tended to result in an uneven distribution of work in the factory. After the new line's appearance, orders would be heavy during the first year but would sag during the ensuing one, in anticipation of what novelties the next issue of sample books might bring. In order to straighten out this uneven line of production, provide steadier hours of employment and promote a more constant interest on the part of distributor and public, a new scheme was devised under which the is-

suance of sample books was spaced six months apart on a staggered basis. Each issue remained current for a period of eighteen months. Thus the acceptability of particular patterns was earlier determined and the vagaries of popular taste the more closely followed with marked advantage to all concerned.

In a period such as this when packaging receives so much attention its application in the field of wallpaper makes an interesting story. When paper began to be produced in rolls it seemed natural just to roll it up with the printed surface inside and so through the years it came to the paperhanger. While, as noted, the carton had now supplanted the bundle, the individual roll came to you as unprotected as in your grandfather's time. A cellophane cover, heat sealed, seemed to provide the needed protection and was promptly tried, and another long-needed advance had been scored, furthered later by the installation of automatic packaging equipment.

Adversity is often a spur to progress, and statistically the wallpaper industry had lost considerable ground. From a pre-war peak production of four hundred million rolls per annum, a fifty percent loss had been registered by 1953 and the trend for the industry was still a downward one. What was back of all these improvements in selling technique, in design, in laboratory analysis, in equipment and manufacturing methods was a determination to reverse this trend as far as the house of Birge was concerned. That the effort was a successful one is a tribute to the executive planning at the top and to the enthusiastic working out of those plans by the staff and employees all along the line. To back up Messrs. Birge and Pemble, there were Vice-President Fred Himmel, Works Manager Albert Flash, Design Director and Stylist Charles S. Freeman, Research Director Matthew Kuclar, Sales Manager and Director of Merchandising Paul R. Nelson and Treasurer Ray Whipple, all of whom through co-operative effort con-

tributed to developing the techniques and new lines that have kept Birge's sales rising in the face of a general decline in the industry.

While the greatest effect of the decline was felt by producers of the cheaper paper there was a real threat to all paper, as such, from the new paints and the ingenious rollers that more and more encouraged householders to do their own wall decorating. The threat was met by Birge in the development of a do-it-yourself wet strength paper that required no home application of paste and no hand trimming. It had a plastic coating from which spots could be easily removed and through the operation of an electric eye, a precision trim was assured. Nor did they forget a paper water box through the use of which the prepasted surface of the paper could be moistened at the very scene of operations. It was marketed dramatically with full publicity and promotion at shows and retails outlets. There were stands in every dealer's store that fascinated the shopper as she read that "Quick" was faster to apply than paint and, besides, competitively priced. And so "Quick" helped materially to turn the tide and the durable satisfactions that come from tasteful paper hangings more than from other media with less character were kept available to the discriminating household, whether or not paperhangers were easy to find.

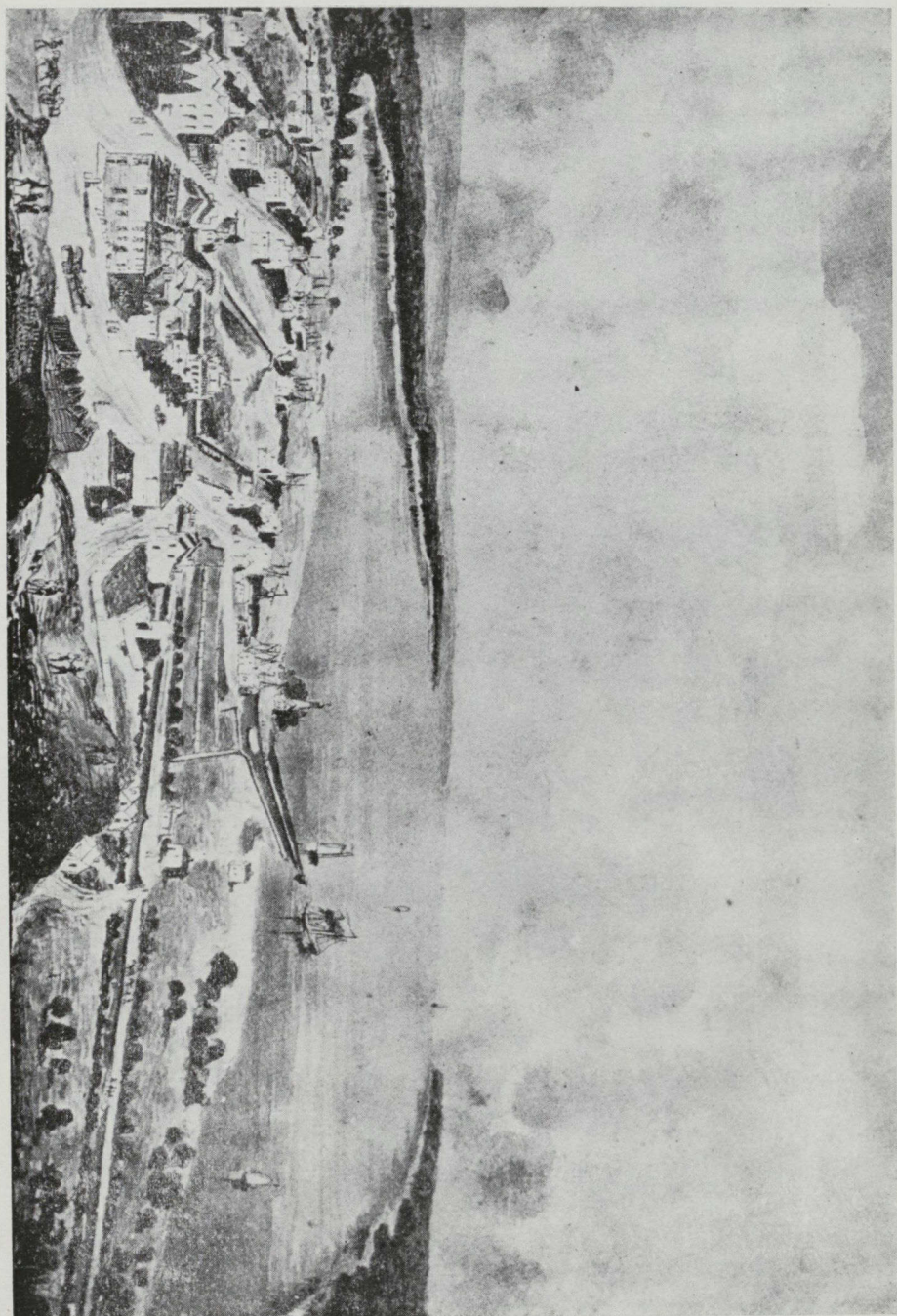
As the Birge Company was the first manufacturer to introduce a do-it-yourself wet strength paper in "Quick" with its plastic surface coating, its built-in adhesive and precision trim, the old traditions of the firm about being first in many phases of the business were impressively maintained. In years past it had been the first to offer paper in sets of wall, ceiling and dado, the first, and, for many years, the only maker of finished flocks and velours by machine process, just as, traditionally, it had been the first to print wallpaper on rotary presses.

But perhaps the most forward looking development concerns the offering in 1958, after two years of research and experiment, of "Fabrique". It is particularly significant that a house like Birge, proud of its high tradition, should be so alert to see in a product of modern science, seemingly unrelated to the paper that had ever been its raw material, an application in the wall covering field, certainly not dreamed of by its producers. This non-woven, vinyl-impregnated fabric was developed especially to Birge specifications and with Birge guidance by one of the nation's most prominent textile research and manufacturing companies. It combines the durability and protection of vinyl and fabric with the colors and finish of the finest wallpaper. Though the whole base is composed of textile fibres, it lacks the warp and woof limitations of woven cloth and so provides an extraordinary tensile strength and elasticity in all directions. Its durability transcends that of laminated vinyls, unlike which it cannot separate into layers. Highly resistant to scuffing and stain, it does not crack or chip, and, when hung, those inevitable folds and wrinkles, as by magic, disappear. Pre-trimmed, it lends itself well to an avoidance of unsightly seams and once affixed, will stay in position and never shrink at seam or edge. Notable, too, is the permanency of the embossing, in which respect it cannot help but remind us of those fine old leather panels that added a touch of sweetness centuries ago to the austerity of castle wall. But that sweetness only a privileged few could enjoy. The imagination and know-how of Birge ever at work through the years in the impressive list of their developments and innovations, of which "Fabrique" is the latest, have made this touch of beauty available to all.

These promotional moves, so numerous in recent years, also furnish evidence justified by their success, of the youthful and aggressive spirit pervading the organiza-

tion. In a period unflattering generally to the industry, it has been a decisive factor in establishing a contrary trend on the distribution of the Birge product. This of course is no new experience for a company now in its one hundred and twenty fifth year. Many are the problems that those years have presented, and, as time goes on, others will doubtless arise. There is always competition, both within and without the industry, and there will be plenty of it in the years ahead. Tastes change in all fields, including that of wall paper. Architects come along who copy the characteristics of the Laurentine villa of Pliny the younger, well-known to an earlier generation of schoolboys. You remember its great windows affording from many angles a view of the Tyrrhenian Sea. Such houses with their restricted wall areas require little paper. But people with no sea-scape will in time regret their loss of privacy and tire of watching trucks and cars go by. As to the painted wall and its current popularity, that, too, can change as the discriminating reflect that one never remembers a wall so treated. Conformity is too much with us and the opposite cult of personality will gain ground. And what better means of expression can it find than the tasteful individualistic effects of modern wallpaper? Something like this seems already afoot across the sea where the recent British leap to prosperity has widely extended the demand for colorful papers which "have gone a long way in turning drab houses into warm and gay homes". (Manchester Guardian Weekly, July 24, 1958).

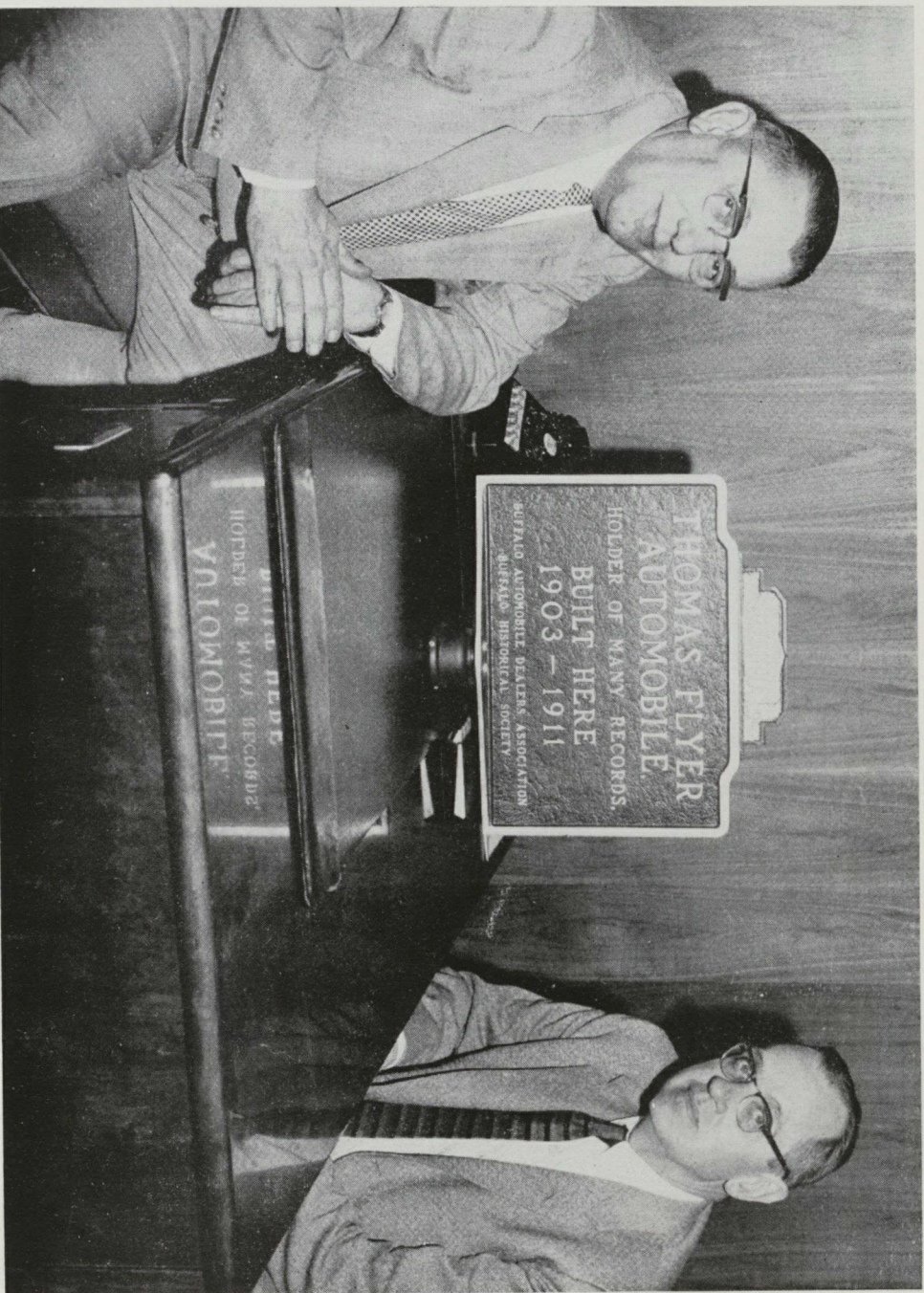
This relief from drab conformity the industry of which Birge is a part can rather uniquely supply. Its product, one would expect, will accordingly find more outlets than ever in the past. And Birge with its aggressive leadership and with the craftsmanship long associated with its shop bids fair to maintain its proud position within the industry for another hundred and twenty-five years.



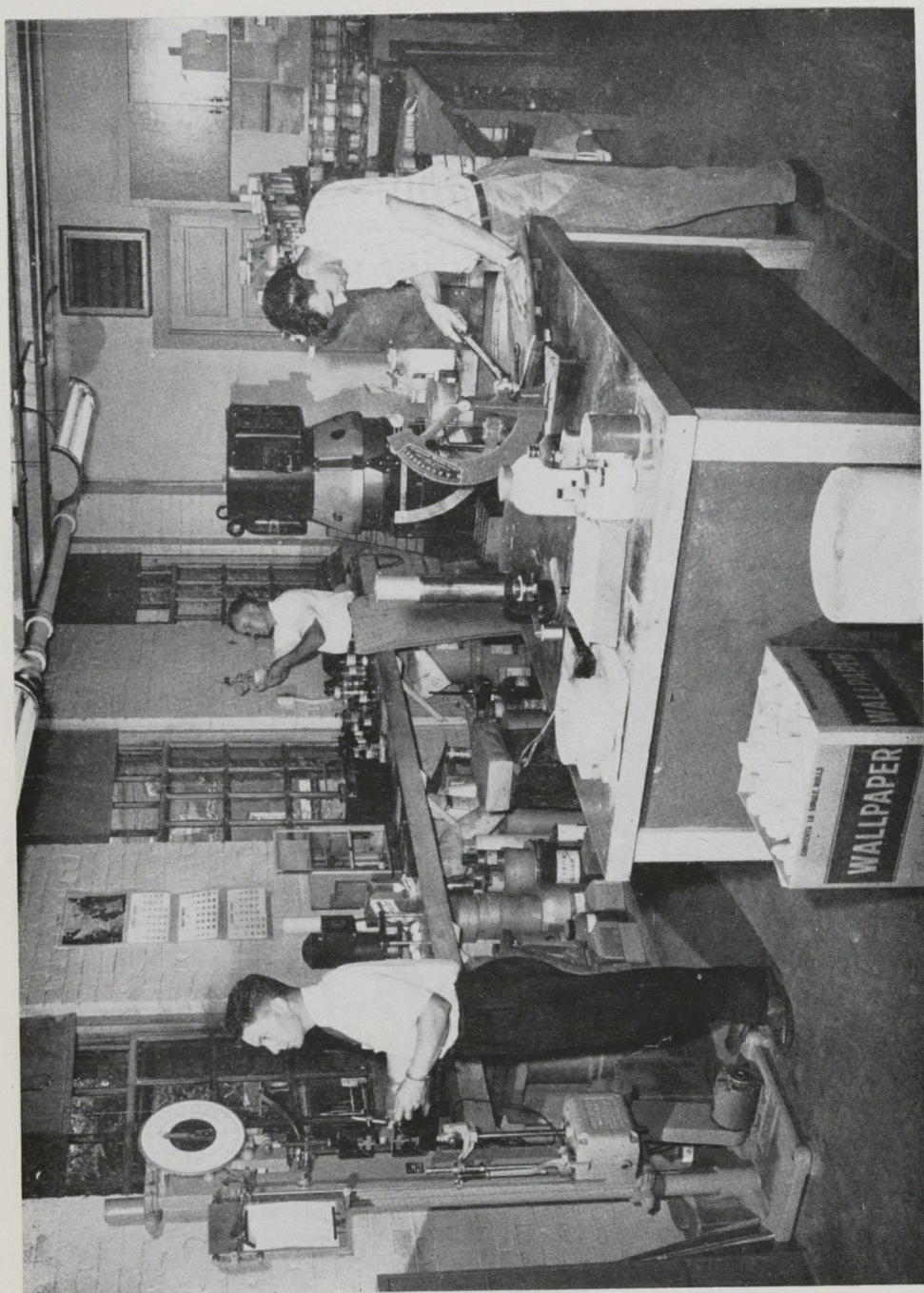
The primitive port of Buffalo, showing the original Erie Canal and the first connecting ships.



*The Glorious Fourth: dedicating the Liberty Pole on the Terrace, July 4, 1895.
The eagle atop the pole is now in the museum of The Buffalo Historical Society.*



Mr. M. J. Echenkamp, President of the Buffalo Automobile Dealers Association, and Director Glover with the latest of our historical markers, now standing before the Thomas Industrial Center, 1200 Niagara Street.



Hard at work at the Birge wallpaper plant, a specially made photograph to show the up-to-date atmosphere and the sturdy, precise machines that are almost in themselves a tradition of the industry.

The Glorious Fourth

by Charles S. Illingworth

Now all the stores were displaying fireworks for the approaching Fourth of July. Neighborhood confectionery and notion stores had firecrackers, torpedos, skyrockets, and other novelties from one or two cents to twenty-five cents and higher, also little printed flags for a penny. The larger stores had more elaborate displays, also bunting and flags of wool and silk. One of the most popular sellers were toy cannons made in the model of a field piece. The barrels were black and the wheels red. They ranged in price from twenty-five cents to a dollar for the large size, which was about six inches long. They also had brass cannon about a foot long with a bore the size of a forty-four revolver.

These cannon were loaded with a charge of loose black powder, packed tight with a wad of cloth or paper, and were fired by a fuse which went into the touch-hole on the top of the barrel. They were dangerous, for they would burst if overloaded, and the powder was handled in the open. Powder was sold by S. J. LeValley, a sporting goods store on Main Street. He always gave a word of caution and advice to the purchasers of gunpowder or cannon.

Of course we all spent pennies for novelties, most of which we fired off as soon as purchased. We had one trick which was dangerous but we considered it good fun. Taking a five- or ten-cent skyrocket, we would lay it on the street along the curb and light the fuse. If all went well it would start with a swoosh, and skid along a block or so.

Two or three days before the Fourth everyone would start decorating with yards and yards of bunting, draped from the veranda roof, threaded through spindles and wound around pillars. Tiny flags were stuck in the hanging baskets and flower boxes, and fancy Japanese

lanterns, made of decorated paper, with a wood bottom fitted with a candle holder, were hung above lawns between the trees. The large flag was raised with appropriate ceremony on the morning of the Fourth.

I was up at daybreak with a box of firecrackers allotted to me the night before to be shot off before breakfast. They were not very big but made a fair racket as I set them off, one by one. After the folks came down to breakfast, father put up the flagpole, we got out a big red cannon cracker, lit it and ran up on the veranda. When it went off with a tremendous bang, we pulled up the flag and the celebration was under way.

After fooling around a couple of hours, I walked up to see what Chester had for noise, he was sure he would get a cannon, which father would not allow me to have, and sure enough, he did have one of good size. When I got to his house he was not in sight, and when I rang the side door bell his sister answered. She was crying, and told me that Chester had been shooting his cannon when a piece of punk had fallen into the can of powder, setting off an explosion that burned him severely. He was laid up for a couple of weeks. Although not scarred, he had two or three black powder marks.

Some of the more daring of the boys held firecrackers in their hands while they exploded, and we had cat-and-dog fights by breaking a firecracker in half and placing the halves on the pavement about a half-inch apart. When the powder between the parts was lighted the burst of flame blew one of the parts back.

In the evening we lit red and green fires, set off pinwheels, Roman candles, fountains, and skyrockets, interspersed with cannon crackers and firecrackers set off by the pack. We covered the large

[Nineteen]

cannon crackers with a tin pan which would be thrown into the air by the force of the explosion. Some families had balloons, made of colored paper with a wire ring and cross pieces at the bottom. A ball of tow or other slow-burning material was soaked in kerosene and fastened to the

wire and ignited. The heated air rising into the balloon carried it into the air and it drifted away over the housetops.

The day after the Fourth we boys went around looking for rocket sticks, which we used to make kite frames or arrows.

The Ebenezer Worship Service

by Frank J. Lankes

THIS being officially recognized as New York's "Year of History" we are encouraged to turn our thoughts backward for a little while and bring the light of other days to shine upon them. One picture that requires no effort to reproduce is an Ebenezer Society Church service of 1859. What we have here is a description of a 1959 Amana, Iowa meetinghouse and order of service; time has brought no change to that service, as it is today in Amana so it once was here in Ebenezer.

The church is remarkable for its architectural austerity and simplicity of arrangement. It is without steeple, belfry or bell, without colorful windows, pulpit, organ or any fixture, symbol or picture of a religious nature. The walls are coated with a very pale blue-tinted whitewash—all woodwork is without paint or varnish—floors, benches, doors and trim are scrubbed with soap and water to a satiny texture of cleanliness that imparts a light and airy aspect to the whole interior.

Desire for exclusion of worldliness originated with their pietist ancestors of the early eighteenth century whose belief it was that worship is a matter of spirit unhampered by any distracting material embellishments.

Women and men enter the meeting through opposite doors, each with a bible and psalter. Benches are arranged in two groups, one side for men and one for women with a wide central aisle separating them; young people of both sides are

seated in the forward rows. At the head of the aisle stands a plain table and chair flanked on each side by a single row of benches for the elders who are seated with backs to the wall facing the congregation.

In the quiet of the room the presiding elder at the table says in German, "In the name of God we will now begin the service," and gives the number of the opening hymn. The singing is in four-part harmony without instrumental accompaniment. All hymns of this congregation are old and have a somewhat melancholy quality associated with antiquity. Voices of the women are clear and penetrating, of the men strong and deep. Their music has power, deliberate timing, and character dominated by a spirit that awakens the mind to thoughts of medieval martyrs of our faith.

After the hymn there is a testamentary reading from one of their old prophets—then prayer.

During prayer the congregation kneel on the floor resting elbows on their benches, congregation facing the rear of the church and elders the head wall. The presiding elder gives a short personal prayer which is taken up by the man occupying the front aisle seat and continued across that row and each row until all have prayed. One is then asked to recite the Apostles' Creed after which the presiding elder gives the closing or common prayer. At alternate times the women on their side pray in the same order.

A scripture reading then follows, each member reading a verse. The presiding elder gives a short sermon on the text and each elder adds to it.

Reading of a psalm, with remarks by presiding elder and other elders in their order of preference, followed by the clos-

ing hymn, done in the same strong style.

Benediction — after which all file out in order, those of the forward benches first then the others in turn. There is no loitering or visiting after service closes. We notice the absence of choir, vocal or instrumental soloist, and collection plate.

Port of Buffalo, 1825-1850

by Marvin A. Rapp

BUFFALO'S harbor, built in 221 days by men who had sufficient faith in its future to join "hands and pockets," was the work of private individuals. From 1821 to 1826 it remained as the first Harbor Company had constructed it. In 1826, the two original piers of stone-filled crib work still continued to parallel the banks of the creek, to hold open its 100-foot mouth, and to maintain a depth of about eight feet. The original channel proved to be navigable for a distance of two-thirds of a mile from its mouth, thereby providing twenty-eight acres of available shipping space.¹

Prior to 1850, the Federal government paid little heed to pleas for internal improvements on the Great Lakes. It proposed to limit its support to the "maintenance and repairs of all lighthouses, beacons, buoys, and public piers." This left it largely to states, cities, corporations, and individuals to develop inner harbors and inner channel-ways as well as wharves, warehouses, and elevators. Between 1826 and 1850 a total of \$207,126.93 in federal aid was, however, applied to the development of the harbor.²

The first federal grant, in 1826, allocated \$15,000 "for building a pier and repairing an old one at the mouth of Buffalo Creek." Empowered by this act, the United States engineer took possession of the piers constructed by Wilkeson and his colleagues and made them a government work. From then until 1850, harbor construction progressed toward two goals, protection and space, including, in spite of narrowly stated policy, the improvement and preservation of the inner harbor, the entrance channelway, and the piers that protected it and the inner harbor.³

To keep the mouth of the creek open required the maintenance of both the north and south entrance piers, especially the south pier, for this pier lay exposed "to the fierce onslaught of the lake when lashed into fury by a southwester." The greatest part of the government grants from 1826 to 1839 went to the devising of a structure and the finding of materials best suited to make the south pier sea-

ditional disputes occurred frequently among federal, states, municipal, and private bodies during the period of harbor development. Generally the Federal government had charge of the entrance channel, sea wall, and breakwaters; the State had control of canals connected with the Erie Canal; the city developed in the inner harbor; and private individuals and corporations dug slips and cuts to their business establishments.

3. *Senate Documents, Appropriations for Rivers and Harbors, From March 4, 1789-June 30, 1882*, 47th Congress (1881-1882) VII, p. 176.

1. Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," V, 243; Whittemore, *Geographic Influences*, p. 186.

2. Emory Johnson, "River and Harbor Bills," *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science*, II (1892), 54. Cited hereafter as Johnson, "Harbor Bills"; Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," p. 242. Jurisdic-

worthy. Time after time storms washed the frail wooden structure away. Gradually a heavy-cut, cemented stone superstructure replaced the old timber-work of Wilkeson's pier, forming a mole or wall fourteen feet above the water and extending 1,790 feet parallel to the entrance channel. Of this, approximately 1,415 feet formed the stone mole, the remainder consisted of cribwork projected in an easterly direction from the inner end of the mole towards the "elbow," or specifically to that point where the Buffalo Creek bends sharply westward to enter the lake. On the channel side of the pier, eleven feet below the top of the wall, engineers laid down a heavy, stone-paved "towing path" for handling the canal boats. On the opposite or lake side of the wall, the facing sloped without a break from the top of the mole to the water's edge. For many years the south pier stood unchanged, an adamant bastion against the incursions of stormy seas, offering a protective arm to storm-tossed vessels.⁴

Meanwhile, the north pier, on the other side of the entrance channel, demanded some attention, but since the south pier bore the brunt of the southwesterly winds, the north pier offered none of the difficult construction problems of its companion.⁵

Some of the federal appropriation of 1826 was diverted to repair the original north pier that Wilkeson and his harbor builders had fashioned with piles and crude stone-filled timber-work. Although subse-

quent national grants provided for its continued maintenance and construction into a more substantial form, no records of the work appear until 1833 when the federal government reported the pier to be 1,250 feet long or 600 feet less than the south mole which it paralleled. Because the harbor engineers had placed great reliance upon the protectiveness of the south mole, they thought it unnecessary to have more than a cheap and frail pier on the north side. In this way they showed an excusable unfamiliarity with the intensity of Lake Erie storms. Even though the south pier helped, it could not under all conditions assure complete protection, nor, what was still more dangerous for the weak north pier, offer any immunity to "blows" from other directions.

By 1839 the continual buffeting of storms had apparently damaged the pier beyond repair, and a new pier was planned. The government report of that year estimated at \$5,016 the cost of rebuilding 2,400 feet of the pier in the form of cribs thirty feet by six feet by five feet high. Three years later the continual pounding of the surf had nearly destroyed the rebuilt pier and had caused a breach in the eastern end, permitting the lake water to pour through into the creek. Although there is no record of rebuilding, the restoration must have been executed in accordance with the plans of the 1839 report, but only for 700 feet eastward from the outer or lake end. Since the remaining 412 feet of the pier lay in channel and was therefore less exposed, the old pile pier probably afforded adequate protection to that section of the channel.⁶

The original eight-foot channel depth between the two piers caused relatively little trouble to shipping and affected harbor development only slightly during the years 1825 to 1850. Since harbor channel depths are scaled to the overall limiting

4. Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," V, 245. See also *Senate Documents, Appropriations and Expenditures for Rivers and Harbors*, 47th Congress, (1881-1882). *Report of Select Committee of Common Council, Harbour and Business, June 1, 1841*, pp. 12-13. Maurice Kingsley, *The History of Buffalo Harbor, 1798-1884*, manuscripts in Buffalo Historical Society, (no pagination), quoting report of Capt. T. C. Williams, for 1842. Cited hereafter as Kingsley, *History of Buffalo Harbor*. *Senate Executive Documents*, 20th Congress, 2nd sess., II, No. 96, pp. 3-12.

5. Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," p. 246. See also Hill, *Buffalo*, I, p. 248.

6. Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," V, 246-247.

depth of the entire waterways system involved in its navigation, the six-foot depth of the St. Clair Flats became the controlling depth from St. Mary's River to Buffalo Creek until 1858. Buffalo's harbor and channelway could, therefore, easily accommodate the vessels used on the lakes except for an occasional deep-draught vessel that operated only in Lake Erie. This fortunate situation, however, did not obviate all the problems connected with the Buffalo entrance depth. With littoral lake currents washing sand into the harbor entrance and the creek depositing its detritus at its mouth, frequent dredging was needed to maintain the eight-foot depth. In addition, lake-level changes often affected the channel opening. The ten-year period following 1822 was one of high water in the lake, and the original eight-foot depth remained unchanged. Between 1832 and 1838, however the depth was increased to ten feet. In 1841, the *Commercial Advertiser and Journal* praised the owners of water-lots adjacent to the Ship Canal for engaging and using a dredging machine at \$40 a day. This led the editor to ask: "Would it not be advisable for our forwarders generally, to employ this machine on the bar near the light-house, and other obstacles now existing in the harbor?" Although no record of additional dredging at the harbor opening appears until 1845, the Select Committee of 1841 nevertheless claimed a 13-foot depth for more than a mile up the creek. Nature, rather than man, probably accounted for this increase in depth, for high water levels prevailed. Except for a bit of dredging in 1845 along the south pier to gain a ten-foot channel width, nothing more was accomplished through 1850. By that date the provision of sufficient entrance-channel protection and more than adequate depth had brought about no more than the first requisite of a harbor: safe and convenient ingress and egress.⁷

There still remained a second pressing need: ample protected space. As the

eastern point of concentration for the lake trade, the Buffalo harbor had two roles: that of a commercial depot for regular business activity, and that of a refuge for ships caught in or running before the treacherous lake storms. More protected space was needed.

Several factors affected the availability of such space. Since the shallow channels limited the size of lake vessels the growing freight and passenger tonnage swiftly multiplied the number to be accommodated, and as most of these were sailing vessels dependent on the will of the wind, adverse conditions frequently kept them wind-bound for days in the tight little harbor. During continued bad weather, a sizeable proportion of the entire lake marine accumulated there, and so packed the harbor that it was completely bridged from one side to the other. Little wonder that inhabitants viewing the harbor from the Terrace referred to it as a "forest of masts."⁸

Harbor enlargement had actually started in pre-canal days with the construction of a slip that appeared on an early canal map simply as a "basin" but that later became known as Commercial Slip. Local interests completed this before the Erie Canal reached Buffalo. The second and by far the most important slip awaited the extension of the canal to Buffalo. With the completion of this extension, private enterprise went on to forge the last connecting link in the long chain of natural and artificial waterways from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes by digging a

7. Whittemore, *Geographic Influences*, pp. 170, 198-200; Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," pp. 242-248; Mansfield, *Great Lakes*, p. 264; Hill, *Buffalo*, I, 248; *Commercial Advertiser and Journal*, June 10, 1841; *Report of Select Committee of Common Council, Harbour and Business*, June 1, 1841, p. 14.

8. George Clinton, "A Sketch of the Early History of Buffalo"; Thomas' *Buffalo Directory*, 1862, p. 25; Whittemore, *Geographic Influences*, p. 183.



The harbor section of the map of Buffalo published by J. S. Buell in 1857 on a scale of 1600 feet to one inch.

canal forty feet wide in the bed of stagnant Little Buffalo Creek — a branch of the larger harbor creek — parallel to the Commercial Slip and at a right angle to the Erie Canal, from which it extended two short blocks to the Buffalo harbor. This connecting link, known as Prime Slip, became an extensive and convenient rendezvous for lake and canal boats. On its wharves as on the harbor docks, piles of freight, unloaded from canal boats, awaited reloading on lake vessels. These and the immediately adjacent wharves on the canal and the harbor formed the heart of the port of Buffalo during the canal era.⁹

The Commercial and Prime Slips have long since been filled in, but the Coit and Evans Slips, built during the late twenties and early thirties, remain. The Coit Slip on the north side of the creek in the outer harbor is just beyond the mouth of the creek. It extends in a north-easterly direction from the Erie Basin. The Evans Slip looks very much like an inverted "Y" when viewed from its entrance at the "elbow" of the creek. During the canal era these slips performed a most necessary function. As trade increased, all the available business sites along the bank of the harbor were put to use. Now elevators, warehouses, mills and other commercial and mercantile houses had to squeeze inland. These water spurs connected the inland establishments with the main artery of traffic and carried their raw materials and finished products to and from their doors, acting much as the railroad spurs of a later age.

In 1836 the city started work on the Main and Hamburg Canal, a waterway intended to extend eastward from the Erie Canal to Hamburg Street. Five years later, after considerable agitation, the State of New York assumed the responsibility and completed this canal as well as the Clark and Skinner Canal. By the

forties this was the state of harbor development. In that decade the community determined that the Federal Government should lend a hand. Improvements in harbor space had come slowly, and only because of dire necessity. Newspapers and special committees continually urged a quicker pace. One committee found that on a particular spring day in 1841 some 140 steamboats and vessels jammed the lower part of the harbor, receiving and discharging cargo or awaiting a favorable wind. Such congestion often caused other vessels to stand by several days waiting for a chance to unload. At times this inconvenience became a serious danger, jeopardizing life and property, when a strong "blow" from the southwest forced additional vessels to seek refuge in the harbor.¹⁰

The agitations grew so intense that Washington began to take notice. For many years there had been little support for internal improvements on the lakes — because Jackson and Van Buren objected in principle to federal aid for local improvements. Tyler's and Polk's vetoes of river and harbor appropriation bills continued this policy.

Colonel Abert, Chief of the Bureau of Topographical Engineers at Buffalo, carried on a written and verbal campaign with his superiors to win their approval of larger appropriations. According to Colonel Abert's report in 1843:

The appropriations and expenditures heretofore made at this place, originated at a period when few anticipated its extraordinary increase and extensive commerce; and although they were highly essential, and have been extremely beneficial, yet the great increase of the trade of that place gives now to previous efforts and plans for the benefit of the harbor a local and limited char-

9. Whittemore, *Geographic Influences*, p. 186; *Buffalo Directory*, 1828, p. 9.

10. Report of the Harbor Committee in relation to an increase of harbor facilities at the city of Buffalo. Approved at a general meeting August 21, 1847 and adopted by the Common Council August 24, 1847, p. 13.

acter — rather the protection of a dock than the construction of a harbor.¹¹

Action was retarded by local bickerings over questions of jurisdiction, financing, and the type of harbor development needed, inner or outer, until 1848. In that year Captain W. G. Williams, of the Topographical Engineers, reminded those concerned that only unanimity of opinion would achieve the desired ends. That year also saw the formation of the Buffalo Board of Trade, which soon "became the nucleus around which citizens rallied in appeals to the Federal Government for harbor appropriations."¹²

The situation had become so obviously desperate that other communities on the Great Lakes began to express alarm. The editor of the Milwaukee *Daily Sentinel* on November 12, 1845, claimed that Buffalo Harbor was so crowded that it was almost impossible for ships to get in or out:

The next ten years, should no unforeseen drawback occur, will swell the number of the Lake Marine and the amount of Lake Commerce immensely. Buffalo must continue to be the chief port on the lower lakes. But the harbor there is already taxed to its utmost capacity. Some other provision is required for the constantly increasing Commerce of our inlanders. An artificial harbor, exterior to Buffalo Creek, has been proposed and seems to be the only feasible plan of improvement. In the construction of this work, the aid of the General Government must be invoked.

11. *Senate Executive Documents* 28th Cong., 1st Sess., I, Vol. I, 211, 1843, pp. 147-150.

12. *Senate Executive Documents*, 28th Congress, 1st Sess., I, No. 1, 1843, p. 150; Buffalo *Daily Courier and Economist*, January 12, October 12, 1884; Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*, January 11, February 15, 1844; April 7, 1845; Buffalo *Daily Gazette*, January 19, 1844; Frank Severance, "Historical Sketch of the Buffalo Board of Trade, The Merchants Exchange and The Chamber of Commerce," in Buffalo Historical Society *Publications*, XIII, 256.

The other lake ports responded in similar fashion to Polk's attitude toward harbor improvement for the West. The editor of the Cleveland *Herald* on August 25, 1846 expressed his ire as follows:

The question so much agitated in 1844, "Who is James K. Polk?" is answered. Sailors — ship-owners — travelers — Democrats — and Liberty men, one and all, ponder upon it and remember that during the three years' reign we are yet to have of the Veto President, his sovereign will and pleasure is that the harbors may look out for themselves . . . all the Pile Drivers and Crane Scows on the lakes [may] be sold forthwith at Auction to the highest bidder for cash."

The Chicago *Democrat* was equally indignant and predicted that "the lakes and rivers will never again under Polk's administration get an appropriation unless by a vote of two-thirds of Congress; hence the north should elect no man to Congress who will not pledge himself on this point." Then, out of this criticism, came the proposal of a river and harbor convention. According to the editor of the Cleveland *Herald* (October 25, 1846), it was

high time that there should be a concert of action in regard to lake and river improvements in the west, and although nothing can be accomplished in regard to appropriations so long as Mr. Polk has power to interpose the veto, the necessary steps can be taken to secure correct public sentiment and favorable consideration, a few years hence.³

These sentiments encouraged a movement of protest that took shape at a preliminary meeting, held in Rathbun's Hotel in New York City on September 28, 1846, where it was decided to hold a river and harbor convention the following year in Chicago. With this the cities of the lakes readily agreed. So 2,318 enrolled delegates and thousands of unofficial delegates

13. Cleveland *Herald*, October 28, 1846 ed. 2, 3; Cleveland *Digest*, Vol. 29, pt. 1, p. 281.

met in Chicago on July 5, 1847. The convention selected James L. Barton of Buffalo as temporary chairman and Edward Bates of Missouri as permanent chairman. The convention resolved that the Federal Government should extend "... its jurisdiction over lakes and navigable rivers, subjecting them to the same laws which prevail on the ocean, its bays and ports ..." and further that the national government should provide adequate harbors and safe navigation facilities for western lakes and rivers.¹⁴

Throughout the lake country and even in other parts of the nation, the convention was ardently discussed. The mere fact, according to *DeBow's Review*, that from 5,000 to 8,000 citizens had assembled from many parts of the Union, far distant from Chicago, "to deliberate and act on the subject ... is in itself of decided significance, and the conclusions of a body so constituted can hardly fail to exert a palpable influence on the public sentiment and legislation of the country."¹⁵ But no immediate action followed. President Polk ignored the convention in his annual message to Congress. This oversight moved the editor of the *Cleveland Herald* to words which reflected the broader national implications of the problem:

Neither the silence of the President, the opposition of Rhett, the sneers of Holmes, nor the selfishness of the South in general, will prevail against that determined pressure of the North and West which demands and will have justice.¹⁶

Meanwhile, as hope that the Federal Government would carry the burden of harbor improvement dwindled, Buffalonians reluctantly accepted the responsibility for Harbor improvement. A correspondent of the *Commercial Advertiser* wrote (March 13, 1847):

To provide sufficient harbor room by local assessment may to some appear to be a great undertaking for Buffalo, but if our citizens will but unite in the location and extent of the improvements to be made, they will be surprised to find their apprehended difficulties yield to their united efforts.

Such unity was promoted in the meeting presided over by Mayor Elbridge G. Spaulding in June of 1847. His plea for a united front and comprehensive plan for development harmonized the divergent interests. Although he recognized the propriety of continuing to petition the government for harbor appropriations, he pointed out that there was little chance of getting such aid in time to meet immediate needs. The state, he declared, was greatly interested in providing ample room for the accommodation of canal boats, but the chief "source for raising the means of meeting the present exigency" was the city. The general plan of improvement adopted at the meeting comprised four parts: the removal of the "Elbow" and the widening, deepening, and straightening of the harbor; the opening of the south channel between the upper harbor and the lake; and, finally, the excavation of a ship canal. Spaulding further suggested the State Canal Board be asked to widen and deepen the Hamburg Street Basin and the Clark and Skinner Canal. In accordance with this, the common council invited seven members of the Board to visit Buffalo. Although the records are lacking to prove it, there is a little doubt that "the enterprising men of the Buffalo Board of Trade impressed upon the State Board the growing needs of shipping interest of Buffalo," and won its consent that the state should accept its share of the cost of harbor enlargement. With this acceptance, and with the realization that Polk's veto of the river and harbor bills of 1845 and 1846 left no hope for aid from the national government, the way was cleared for the application of city

[Twenty-seven]

14. Mansfield, *Great Lakes*, pp. 201-203.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 206.

16. *Cleveland Newspaper Digest*, December 22, 1847, ed. 1, 3, p. 97, Vol. 30, pt. 1.

and state funds in a plan for logical development of inner harbor enlargement.¹⁷

This development, which reached its culmination in the proposals of 1847, sought to overcome the many undesirable restrictions by which nature had handicapped Buffalo Creek and the inner harbor. To relieve the increased canal traffic, harbor planners designed and constructed slips, basins, and inner canals; to aid the lake marine, they deepened and widened the harbor and, in accordance with the plan adopted in 1847, completed the city ship canal. The state constructed the Ohio Basin and Slip, and all of the work was completed in 1852. At that time it consisted of the Main and Hamburg Canal, which extended from the Erie Canal one and a half miles to the Ohio Slip. This slip branched sharply southward and emptied into the Ohio Basin, a large pool 1,100 feet long, 500 feet wide, and from eight to 13 feet deep, which acted as a second terminal for the Erie Canal. The Basin flowed into Buffalo Creek through a short, revitalized stream called Dead Creek. The other arm of this system was the Clark and Skinner Canal, located about half way between the Ohio Basin on the southeast and Prime Slip on the southwest connecting the Main and Hamburg Canal and Buffalo Creek.¹⁸

Just as this system reduced the congestion of canal boats, so too did the City Ship Canal give greater available shipping space to lake vessels. This ambitious proposal of 1847 came to fruition in 1850. The City Ship Canal split the narrow strip of land between the lake and the creek. It

ran southeasterly 6,050 feet from the "elbow" of the Creek. Twice during the early fifties it was extended. At the same time, four slips, those of Peck, Hatch, Pratt and Wadman, were cut across it. This development more than doubled the harbor area. It utilized hitherto useless land, providing thereby much needed commercial sites, creating convenient wharfage and anchorage for greater ease in loading and unloading, and, finally, helping the port of Buffalo to keep abreast of the increased commercial activity of the Erie Canal and Great Lakes.¹⁹

Contemporaneous with and correlative to the projection and completion of the extensive system of inner harbor cuts and canals were the dredging and excavating activities which maintained and improved both the natural and the artificial channels. Much of this work centered about the "elbow" where sand accumulations encroached on the creek channelway. The United States engineers proposed the removal of the "elbow" in 1834 and the following year executed the plan. Work continued spasmodically on this until 1845 when a ten-foot depth, equal to that in the entrance channel, was reached. To prevent the dangerous congregation of ships in the lower part of the creek from Prime Slip to the mouth of the harbor, the Common Council in 1846 resolved to push an eight-foot channel upstream to Illinois Street. By 1847 the harbor committee reported a depth of 13 to 14 feet for a mile up the creek.²⁰

Throughout the period of inner-harbor development, the need for better protection was constantly pressing. This can readily be appreciated by an understanding of the harbor's exposed location in re-

17. Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*, June 7, 1847; Severance, "Board of Trade," p. 234.

18. Hill, Buffalo, I, 247; Whittemore, *Geographic Influences*, pp. 192-193 quoting the War Dept. Corps of Engineers, Buffalo Harbor, letter from Secretary of War relative to different plans for the improvements of Buffalo Harbor, New York, January 6, 1849; *House of Representatives Documents*, Dec. 30, 2nd. Sess., No. 23, 1849, p. 3; *Commercial Advertiser*, June 7, 1847; U. S. Army, *The Port of Buffalo*, p. 3.

19. Whittemore, *Geographic Influences*, p. 195. Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*, June 7, 1847; Mansfield, Great Lakes, p. 289.

20. Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor" V, 248; *Report of Select Committee of Common Council, Harbour and Business*, June 1841, p. 90.

lation to the lake. Buffalo Creek flows irregularly in a northwesterly direction to the "elbow" where it has been turned westward to enter the lake. Except for the short distance from the "elbow" to the mouth, the creek runs almost parallel to the lake for a mile and a half and is separated only by a low and sandy spit of land varying from 60 to 90 rods in width. This tongue of land, which was split in two by the excavation of the 200-foot wide City Ship Canal, offered little security to the inner harbor from the swells and storms of the open lake. The strongly prevailing winds at time rolled waves two and three feet deep across the sandy peninsula, endangering vessels, wharves, and warehouses in the creek and canal. Moreover, the presence of the south pier increased the danger by causing the "storm-driven waters of the lake to pile up in the angle which the pier made with the spit." Harbor engineers feared that the incessant pounding of the waves might cut through the angle at the south pier and the sandy-pit and open another mouth south of the original one.

At the time the national government assumed control, in 1826, the army engineers knew of the threatening effect of lake storms upon shipping and harbor installations across the peninsula. No action followed, however, until 1837 when high water levels again brought the problem of harbor safety to the fore. That year the Common Council of the city petitioned the Federal Government for the construction of a sea wall along the lake shore on the split.

. . . During the recent gale (22nd November) immense damage was done. The shore was washed away for a considerable distance, much of the loose soil on the peninsula removed, deep channels worn in the hard earth, the United States pier so injured as to require prompt repair, the shipping driven out of the Harbor into the middle of our streets, the wharves and store houses

greatly damaged and several lives lost. The council went on to warn the Secretary of War that unless the government constructed a sea wall with dispatch, another year might find no harbor at the eastern extremity of Lake Erie which would be not only an irreparable loss to the lake marine but of "incalculable injury" to the government in the event of war with England.²¹

Whether it was the threat of a lake invasion or of an English invasion or both, the War Department and Congress promptly granted the petition and during 1838 started throwing up an earth mound with "masonry facing, running from the end of the wall enclosing the lighthouse lot and parallel to the shore, 200 feet from it to the southward, to protect that part of the city from inundation." The crest of the mound was 14 feet above the water. By 1840, as much as 3,770 feet of it had been completed and that year it withstood a lake gale which raised the water level six feet eight inches above its normal stage. Thereafter lack of funds stopped the work. According to the engineers' report of that year, this stoppage was much to be regretted, "as the unfinished termination of the wall is extremely exposed and calls for attention." His advice went unheeded and nothing more was done on the sea wall.²²

Then on October 18, 1844 disaster struck. For three days, a continuous wind drove the waters of the lake upward; and without warning it shifted with great force, throwing an "unheralded avalanche of waters . . . upon a sleeping community"

21. Copy of a petition to the Secretary of War in relation to the Sea Wall in 1837, manuscript in the Buffalo Historical Society, quoted in Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," (footnote), pp. 254-255; *ibid.*, V. 253; Kingsley, *History of Buffalo Harbor*; Hill, *Buffalo*, I, 250-251.

22. Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," V. 255; Kingsley, *History of Buffalo Harbor*; *House of Representatives Doc.*, 27th Cong., 1st Sess. (1841), No. 2, I, 71.

with such violence that ships were lifted out of the harbor and were tossed, like sticks of wood, onto the shore. The following day the dead were laid in rows on the floor of the Court House and City Hall awaiting identification. The loss of life and property was appalling. Among other installations, the storm destroyed a considerable part of the sea wall and caused engineers to change its construction. Work was not resumed on this project until 1866, but by then, engineers were attending to the greater protection of the harbor with outer breakwaters.²³

Shipping protection is not limited to sea walls, piers, and breakwaters. With all these important accoutrements, a harbor would not be a harbor worthy of its trade

23. Barton Atkins, *Modern Antiquities*, p. 155; Thomas Nichols, *Forty Years of American Life*, pp. 101-103; Julia Snow, "Early Recollections of Buffalo," Vol. 17, Buffalo Historical Society Publications, pp. 132-133; Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," V. 255-264.

without a lighthouse, for a harbor beacon is almost as necessary to a ship as its rudder. The Government constructed the first light at Buffalo near the "elbow" in 1820. In 1833 a new light was built at the end of the south pier. When completed, the tower measured 44 feet in height, 20 feet in diameter at the base, and 12 feet at the top under the cornice, with four-foot walls tapering to two feet at the top. This lighthouse has been modified somewhat in its more than 100 years of existence, although it no longer guides ships into the harbor. A light on the breakwater now does this work.²⁴

24. Kingsley, *History of Buffalo Harbor*; Symons and Quintus, "History of Buffalo Harbor," V, 283; *Buffalo Journal*, March 27, 1827; *Report of Select Committee of Common Council of Buffalo*, June 1, 1841, pp. 12-13; *Senate Executive Documents*, 47th Cong., 1st Sess., VII, No. 196, p. 176; Williams, *Annual Register*, 1834, p. 289; Bingham, *Cradle of the Queen City*, p. 487.

Books You May Want to See

Niagara: Hinge of the Golden Arc. By MARJORIE CAMPBELL FREEMAN, Toronto, The Ryerson Press, 1958.

In writing *Niagara: Hinge of the Golden Arc*, Mrs. Marjorie Campbell Freeman has condensed approximately three hundred and fifty years of the history of the Niagara area, on both sides of the river, into three hundred and forty-four pages. While this in itself is remarkable, it is also obvious that a complete history of the Niagara Frontier cannot be compressed in that brief space. More aptly, the book may be called a survey of the Canadian Niagara Frontier.

The author displays an amazing amount of detailed knowledge concerning the west side of the river but makes a feint, usually, at relating happenings on the American side of the Niagara Frontier.

[Thirty]

For example, it is stated (p. 73) that Sir William Johnson was the first British commandant of Fort Niagara. This is not so, for Johnson bullied himself into the command of the British forces upon the death of General Prideaux. Actually, the command should have gone to Lt. Col. Massey who wrote to General Amherst stating that he had subordinated himself to Johnson for the good of the service. Johnson wrote to Amherst begging for command of the fort but received a cold shoulder from the general who designated General Gage to replace Prideaux at Niagara. English records show that Johnson, who was merely a leader of a horde of unorganized Indians aiding the British, was never commandant at Fort Niagara. He is listed as British Superintendent of Indian Affairs, a position more suited to his temperament. It would have been re-

markable indeed if the British Army had allowed a provincial like Johnson to replace a regular army officer like Prideaux.

The reader, American, becomes somewhat indignant at the statement (p. 103) that a "holdover" clause of the Treaty of Paris, 1783, resulted in British possession of Fort Niagara until 1796. Articles V and VI of the Treaty of Paris stated, concerning the Loyalists, that they should not be persecuted further and that the United States Congress was to *recommend* to the states the restoration of Loyalist property. This the Congress did. However, Article VI did stipulate that British troops would evacuate American soil. This they chose not to do until after the Jay Treaty was ratified by the United States Senate on June 22, 1795. In the meantime, they entertained the hope of regaining the colonies and availed themselves of the rich fur trade. That the British incited the Indians to the west against the American settlers is well known, but that has no place here.

Indignant too becomes the American when the author chooses to repeat (p. 128) a statement from the book of Mr. W. Stewart Wallace, *The United Empire Loyalists*, attributing to General Washington the remark that "he (Washington) could see nothing better for them (the Loyalists) to do than to commit suicide".

Much is said of the "wanton" murder of the loyal Canadian, Edgeworth Ussher, by the Canadian rebels in 1837. However, though the author writes of the capture of the American ship CAROLINE (p. 218) by the loyalist Colonel Sir Allan Napier MacNab, hushed is the fact that the capture constituted an invasion of American soil and forgotten is the "wanton" murder of Amos Durfee, a Buffalonian who was standing on the dock, by MacNab's men.

Perhaps the most disturbing statement made by the author and one which proves that the author knows little of the history of the American Niagara Frontier, is that

in relating the circumstances by which Goat Island received its name (footnote p. 233) she says that the island was "later owned by Augustus Porter, ancestor of General Peter B. Porter". The men were brothers, Augustus being four years Peter's senior, and partners in a variety of businesses the ramifications of which to a large extent laid the foundation of the commercial enterprise now found on the American Niagara Frontier.

It is rather disappointing that Mrs. Campbell repeated the story of the Laura Secord affair. Rather it could be hoped that she would shed some light on this episode, the truth of which is being doubted more and more by historians of the Niagara Frontier. Excellent reasons for discrediting Mrs. Secord's exploit can be found on pp. 99-103 of General Louis L. Babcock's *War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier*, Vol. XXIX of the Buffalo Historical Society Publications, Buffalo, 1927. Another exposé of the Secord story can be found in *The Story of Laura Secord: A Study in Historical Evidence* by W. Stewart Wallace, Macmillan Co., Toronto, 1932, pp. 3-26.

The author's description of the growth of the Welland Canal is fascinating. It brings to light the oft-neglected story of the trials of the builders of the original canal and the obstacles of a later day when the canal, its value proved, was enlarged and rerouted. The present Welland waterway or Ship Canal is actually the fourth Welland Canal, having been constructed in 1913.

Another item of interest so vividly related by Mrs. Campbell is the struggle between the industrialist of today and the fruit growers. While it is true that the land on the frontier is ideal for industry and that fruit can be grown elsewhere, it is also true that the soil of the Lake plains produces fruit of outstanding flavor for which the Niagara Frontier is famous.

Mrs. Campbell's book shows, in an interesting fashion, how the Canadian Niag-

ara Frontier has evolved from a pastoral stage to a commercial and industrial position. The author feels that the future of the area is at present better than ever due to the advantageous changes about to be wrought by the St. Lawrence Seaway. I heartily agree with her.

Niagara University

DR. I. FRANK MOGAVERO

Bloomers and Bugles. By ARCH MERRILL.

Rochester: Seneca Book Binding Company, 1958. \$2.75.

Arch Merrill's seventeenth book continues his skillful recounting of the familiar tales of Western New York, with some borrowing from other parts. The "bloomers" of the title refers to the women's rights movement, of which the most vivid item was the trouser costume worn by some of the more famous participants; the "bugles" give us the terminal date of his narratives, the close of the Civil War. The stories include some of the many about the gaudy mountebanks of the period 1830 - 1860 when New York State was crowded with people who knew how to remake things to a better pattern: spiritualists, Phrenologists, abolitionists, and many other such make good copy. William H. Seward is among them, but after being utterly damned by the author's remark that "he hardly ever spoke from conviction" is immediately redeemed by being fatuously accepted as the authority on the character and accomplishments of his bitter rival, Millard Fillmore. But since all other historians before Dr. Rayback have

committed the same folly, why not Mr. Merrill? So Fillmore is once more slandered with Seward's epithets, and the performance is too characteristic of popular writing to be singled out for condemnation. Readers are warned to be cautious in belief while enjoying the old tales.

The Octagon Fad. By CARL F. SCHMIDT.
Scottsville: Carl F. Schmidt, 1958.

This is another triumph of Carl Schmidt's devotion to the architectural history of this region. He has followed another of our building innovations all over the country, locating octagonal structures far and wide with an admirable thoroughness and accuracy. His introduction explains briefly the origin of the idea of building in this form and some of its consequences. It is an invaluable reference manual.

Under the Mountain. By MARGARET D. ROBSON. Buffalo: Henry Stewart, Incorporated, 1958.

This is a convenient summary for school use of the stories that have gathered around the village of Lewiston. Some of the more recent scholarship has been added, particularly the work of Clarence O. Lewis, the official Historian of Niagara County, and some work has been done in the sources. Some myths have been preserved in the text and there are a few positive errors, but the real need for such books is tolerably well served nevertheless.



Jacob Taylor, Quaker Missionary Statesman

by Levinus K. Painter

THE first white people to establish residence in what is now the Town of Collins, New York, came as Quaker missionaries to render service among the Seneca Indians on the Cattaraugus reservation. Within a year after the arrival of Jacob Taylor and his associates other Quaker families came by way of the water level route across New York to hew out for themselves homes in what was then the western wilderness. The representatives of the Philadelphia Indian Committee came for no selfish purpose; their sole concern was the welfare of their Indian brothers.

Jacob Taylor, born 1760 at Kennett, Pennsylvania, was a member of Sadsbury Friends Meeting, Philadelphia yearly meeting, when he first felt led to undertake ministry among the Indians. Under the guidance of the Philadelphia Indian Committee he gave three years (1796-99) of service among the Oneida Indians in Central New York. This was followed by nine years of ministry among the Seneca Indians on the Allegany reservation. When he came to Clear Creek to labor among the Seneca people on the Cattaraugus reservation he had already given twelve years of service on reservations and was mature in years and experience. He never married and with almost tireless energy gave himself to his labor of love. Traditions regarding his height and weight do not agree but it is safe to say that he was at least six feet five inches tall and in later years weighed well over 300 pounds. His physical bearing must have been impressive to both Indians and whites wherever he went.

As early as 1792 Philadelphia Quakers had visited the Senecas in the Cattaraugus area. Then the next year, 1793, William Savery and his five companions had travelled with the Indians of the Iroquois

Confederacy and the representatives of the United States Government to Detroit where weeks of frustrating negotiations resulted in a stalemate. The next year, the fall of 1794, negotiations were continued under somewhat more favorable circumstances at Canandaigua, but the Indian leaders refused to conclude terms of a possible treaty until the Quakers, again under the leadership of William Savery, could be present.

The Indians finally signed the treaty on November 11, 1794. This and succeeding treaties pretty well established the boundaries of Western New York reservations. The tragic battle of Fallen Timbers some months earlier forced the surviving Indian leaders to recognize the superior military power of the new United States government. With the signing of this treaty the glory and political power of the Iroquois Confederacy came to a humiliating end. After counseling as best they could with their Indian brothers, the Quakers turned from treaty making to helping the proud people of the forest bridge the gap between cultures. There seemed to be no choice; if the remaining Indians were to survive they would have to accommodate themselves, in some measure at least, to the white man's way of life. This proved to be a trying experience for both the Quakers and the Indians, yet a remarkable degree of confidence and understanding was maintained.

Within two years after the Canandaigua treaty was signed, Friends had established themselves among the Oneida Indians. At the age of thirty-six Jacob Taylor became one of this Quaker group and received his first training in Indian service. As indicated above, after three years of none-too-fruitful effort Friends closed their center on the Oneida reservation and concentrated their efforts with the Seneca

[*Thirty-three*]

nation on the Cornplanter reservation in northern Pennsylvania and the Allegany reservation across the line in New York. Cornplanter had been in correspondence with Friends since 1791, which was before the formal organization of the Philadelphia Indian Committee.

In 1799 Jacob Taylor with his companions and others sent from Philadelphia made a fresh pioneering venture among the Seneca Indians on the Allegany reservation. The Indians on the neighboring Cattaraugus reservation, fifty miles north, soon observed the advantage of having Quaker neighbors to help them cope with the problems of living in a settled community and within a restricted area. These problems were made more acute as the constant stream of white settlers closed in about them. As early as 1799 the Cattaraugus Indian Chiefs, led by Chief Warrior (Wa'ondegohta), had addressed a communication to the Quakers in Philadelphia asking for help in securing irons for setting up a saw mill and for instruction in better ways of farming. Thomas Stewardson and Joshua Sharpless were appointed to take a reply in person and at the same time the mill irons were dispatched in care of William Johnson in Buffalo. A later reference indicates that the Indians had trouble operating this mill and that it never functioned effectively.

A letter from the Cattaraugus chiefs dated January 22, 1800, expressed thanks for the mill but they asked for help to build it. The Quakers, however, could spare no person from their staff who could set up a saw mill and teach agriculture. They did send them tools, "instruments of husbandry", in 1799 and again in 1801. Meanwhile the Quakers were having a difficult time to maintain a sufficient staff at Tunesassa on the Allegany reservation where their work was just getting started. It was not until 1807 that they felt sufficiently well established to consider extension of their work and

to prepare the way for a permanent staff to reside on or near the Cattaraugus reservation.

Before beginning work on the Allegany reservation the Philadelphia Indian Committee had addressed a communication to President Washington informing him of their concern to labor among the Seneca Indians of Western New York. They received an encouraging reply from Timothy Pickering, Secretary of State. Pickering also addressed a letter to the Indian Chiefs and other letters to the Indian agent, Israel Chapin, and to the official interpreter, Jasper Parish. He requested Chapin and Parish to explain to the Indians the purpose of the Quakers and encourage them to open the way for the Quakers "whose sole object is their [the Indians'] happiness." The letter, dated February 15, 1796, from Pickering to the Indian Chiefs is worthy of more extended quotation:

I have great pleasure to inform you that your good friends, the Quakers, have formed a wise plan to show your young men and boys the most useful practices of the white people. . . . These good men will do this only for the love they bear to you, their fellow men, as children of the Great Spirit, whom they desire to please.¹

Merle H. Deardorf and George Snyderman in their comment on the relevance of the John Phillips journal detailing his visit among western New York Indians in 1806 pay tribute to the unique service rendered by Friends among the Indians:

It is likely that the Quakers were the only missionary group which considered the Indians first as humans who needed help in a rapidly changing economy,

1. Minutes of the Indian Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends, Record Room of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 302 Arch Street. Quotations unless otherwise indicated are from the Minutes of this committee, but are cited by date of the document rather than of the minute referred to. The author had access to Taylor's letters as well as to the Minutes.

and then as possible converts to a specific sect of Christianity. . . . The Indians must learn new ways of making a living before they could turn to the white man's religion.²

In 1807 the Philadelphia Indian Committee instructed Jacob Taylor to visit the Cattaraugus reservation "without apprising them of the present intentions of the Committee and to obtain a general and correct knowledge of their circumstances . . . their habits of industry and the state of agriculture among them . . . and to discover if there is any stream of water that warrants the erection of a small grist mill. . . ."

Jacob Taylor reported poverty, prevalence of drinking and "indisposition to work", but he nevertheless felt that help should be extended to them. He also found a location on a small stream (the south branch of Clear Creek) joining the reservation on the east that was suitable for the erection of a mill. He also suggested that plow irons and log chains be provided at the first opportunity. He did further investigating in the spring of 1808. He reported in a letter sent to the Indian Committee from Batavia that on June 8, 1808 he had contracted with Joseph Ellcott, agent for the Holland Land Company, for the purchase of land on Clear Creek just east of the Cattaraugus reservation in what is now the Town of Collins. The contract is worthy of quoting in full:

Jacob Taylor on account of the Society of Friends contracts to purchase from 5 to 7 hundred acres of land to be located on the north west and south west corners of Township 607 (later designated as Township 7) in the 8th Range of Townships of the Holland Land Company. As the purchase is for the establishment near the Indians at Cattaraugus for the purpose of instructing them in the habits of civilized life, the Holland Land Company, considering the

object so laudable a nature, have agreed to dispose of said land at \$1.55 per acre cash, and also to contribute \$2.00 per mile toward making a horse road from or near Sturgeon Point on Lake Erie to the land aforesaid, and the same price per mile if the same horse road be continued thence until it shall intersect the Pennsylvania Road leading from Cattaraugus to the Allegheny River.

The said Jacob Taylor having hereby liberty given to take immediate possession and commence improvements.

On October 4, 1809 a deed was drawn for 700 acres and the title invested in the name of the Philadelphia Indian Committee. On this deed there is a scale map showing the location and giving the survey details of the four plots of land forming a single block in Townships 6 and 7. The Philadelphia Indian Committee actually paid only a little over \$1,000 for 700 acres of land after deducting the allowance for road building. By air line the land purchased is fourteen miles from Sturgeon Point on Lake Erie.

The Philadelphia Indian Committee was always careful in regard to public relations with the Indians as well as with the Federal Government. Extracts of their message to the Chiefs on the Cattaraugus reservation reveal the deep concern of the Quakers for their Indian brothers:

Brothers, we have been many years endeavoring to show your brothers at Allegany the advantages of cultivating the earth and raising domestic animals and we trust that many of you have been eye witnesses to the improvements that they have made and the benefit they have experienced by following our advice and the example we have set before them. . . .

Brothers, we believe it right to purchase a piece of land adjoining yours to accommodate such Friends as might feel disposed to reside there and to render you some instruction in the cul-

[*Thirty-five*]

2. *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 100 No. 6, p. 583 (1956).

tivation of your land or otherwise promote your welfare. . . .

Brothers, we wish you to remember that this happy development will depend on the part you take. You must not expect our Friends to do all the work for you, but lay hold of the plow and the hoe yourselves. Teach your boys to be industrious while they are young. Your young men must give up the false notion of honor if you expect to reap the productions of a fruitful field. . . .³

Under the same date the female Chief, Oyongogoss, addressed a communication to the Indian Committee in which she said, "I am very thankful for the knowledge I have acquired from your women." She went on to express appreciation for the instruction given the Seneca women in spinning and weaving. The writing of this message reveals something of the high position of Indian women in social and political life.

Under the leadership of Jacob Taylor the Quakers started building a house in the fall of 1808 and at the same time contracted for the clearing of twelve acres of land and got about six acres of wheat sowed. However, they did not get the house sufficiently completed for winter living before the cold weather set in so it was necessary for Jacob Taylor and Benjamin Cooper to return to Tunesassa for the winter months. The difficulties of travel and transport are indicated in the rather matter-of-fact record of the transfer of goods and household equipment from Tunesassa to Clear Creek in June, 1809:

We arrived here after a journey of five and one-half days, and although the road in many places was much obstructed by bridges being carried away and much fallen timber, we got through with safety sooner than we expected without any manner of accident. [The total distance was less than fifty miles.]

3. April 13, 1809.

[*Thirty-six*]

A respectable man was engaged early in the spring to clear fifteen acres, with what is now already cleared or under way will make in all about thirty acres. He has lately moved here with his family. . . . The wheat we sowed last fall looks promising. . . .⁴

Later the same year four Philadelphia Friends representing the Indian Committee travelled to Western New York to observe developments at first hand. The delegation consisted of Amos Lee, John Brown, Thomas Stewardson, and William Alliston. The usual course of travel was to come over the mountains to Pittsburgh and then up the Allegheny river, a trip of about 500 miles. They brought with them a letter addressed to the Indians of Cattaraugus commending them for their progress and exhorting them against the evils of strong drink. As was customary the Indians replied in an extended message addressed to the Indian Committee. The tone of the letter is revealed in the brief quotation: "We are thankful for your friendly advice. Our hearts rejoice for the good counsel you have given us and we ask you to keep your minds strong toward us."

Stephen Twining had joined Jacob Taylor, Benjamin Cooper and Hannah Jackson at the Clear Creek farm. They wrote to the Committee on December 18, 1809 that the house had been put in condition for winter and that crops had turned out well. Ten acres of wheat had been put in and twenty-seven acres of land cleared. They also observed that the use of liquor among the Indians had appreciably declined and the Indians were evidencing a reasonable degree of industry. They stressed the need of a grist mill and for more hand tools. A further interesting comment is made: "A number of Friends have recently purchased land in this neighborhood, that a considerable settlement is expected will shortly be made. Suitable persons may be found among them to aid

4. The same date.

in the concern, especially in weaving, etc.
...

The Aldrich family had taken up a considerable tract of land on Cattaraugus Creek above the reservation where the village of Gowanda now stands. Other Quaker families were arriving from Saratoga County and from Vermont. A Preparative Meeting had been set up at East Hamburg (Orchard Park) in 1807 and by 1810 there were a few Friends meeting for worship in Buffalo. A meeting was established at Shirley in 1813. Not until 1814 is there specific reference to a meeting for worship at Taylor Hollow, but it was the custom of Friends, wherever they were, to have their "time of silent waiting on First Day". We can assume that as soon as the Quaker household was established on the Clear Creek farm the Sabbath Day became a day of rest and worship. When a man came across the hills from Zoar Valley on horseback on the Sabbath with a bag of corn to be ground Jacob Taylor promptly sent him home.

In 1810 Friends at Cattaraugus had a conference with Red Jacket, then living on the Buffalo Creek reservation, and other Cayuga sachems, regarding training their young men in crafts and providing them with tools. Red Jacket recognized that their young men must be trained to live in the white man's world and wanted Friends to give them guidance in "agricultural pursuits". He was also in favor of sending Indian young men to Philadelphia to live in the homes of Friends that they might learn the white man's ways. Apparently he was thinking in terms of his own family. The death of two of his children soon afterwards must have dimmed his hopes of such a venture. Excerpts from Red Jacket's speech show his warm feeling for the Quakers:

I am unable to express the thankfulness I feel for the many acts of kindness your Society [Quakers] have shown to us, particularly when the old gentlemen [John Elliott and com-

panions] attended at our treaties and I am happy in observing your disposition to pursue the same track of conduct your fathers observed toward the Indians. . . . Now I return [thanks] to you, on behalf of myself and the three chiefs present, for the present you make to us [hand tools] in order to brighten the chain made by your fathers and ours.

The phrase "brighten the chain" was frequently used both by the Indians and the Quakers in their communications. These messages fill hundreds of handwritten pages in the Indian Committee records revealing concern and understanding on the part of the Quakers and confidence and appreciation on the part of their Indian brothers. Sometimes the Quakers did much exhorting and gave pointed advice but it was done in love and was received without resentment.

Soon after the arrival of Jacob Taylor and his companions at the Clear Creek farm the Holland Land Company sold "pre-emption rights" for the Cattaraugus reservation to the Ogden Land Company. Of course the Indians were not informed of this action. In May 1809 Jacob Taylor received a letter from Joseph Ellicott, land agent in Batavia, introducing Thomas L. Ogden of New York City, one of the proprietors of the "pre-emptive rights". Ellicott requested Jacob Taylor to find the attitude of the Indians regarding their disposition to sell or exchange their lands for areas in the west. Thus began the first of a long series of efforts on the part of the Ogden Land Company to dispossess the Seneca Indians on the Cattaraugus reservation. Only fifteen years earlier the Federal government had guaranteed reservation lands to the Indians in the treaty of Canandaigua.

The Ogden Land Company tried to enlist the aid of the Quakers. Obviously they did not know the Quakers. During the next three years repeated efforts were made to negotiate with the Indians. Jacob

[Thirty-seven]

Taylor gave the Indians his moral support and used his influence effectively. His towering figure backed by a strong personality and a righteous cause made him a person to be taken seriously. At the same time the Philadelphia Indian Committee was supporting him with letters to Timothy Pickering, Secretary of State. Pickering knew many of the Quakers personally and held them in high regard. Philadelphia was far away, but Jacob Taylor stood, an alert watchman, on the border of the reservation. The Indians kept their lands but the Ogden Land Company showed no great love for the Quakers. There is good reason to believe that the Indians would have lost the entire reservation had it not been for the efforts of Jacob Taylor and the supporting Indian Committee in Philadelphia. The events of history were for the moment on the side of the Indians. The records reveal no activity of the Ogden Land Company during the War of 1812, a disturbance hardly conducive to land speculation on the Niagara Frontier. In fact, a considerable number of settlers left their holdings and retired temporarily to areas of greater security.

Military activities did not greatly disturb the Quakers. Jacob Taylor and his companions remained quietly on their Clear Creek farm. They were witnesses demonstrating creative spiritual power that is not challenged by the instruments of war. A saw- and gristmill had been completed in the fall of 1811. The Indians were enlarging and fencing clearings and a few had acquired oxen and carts or wagons. They were taking advantage of Jacob Taylor's sawmill to convert logs into lumber with which to build better houses. The Ogden Land Company was forgotten for a time but the tensions of the white man's conflict shook their confidence in present or future security. The Quakers advised Indians to stay out of the conflict for they had no stake in the war. Only twenty short years previously war

had destroyed the political power of the Iroquois Confederacy and sadly decimated the Indian population in Western New York. Most of the older men had vivid memories and stayed at home. Some of the younger men, craving excitement and with nothing to lose, responded to the urging of the white military leaders only to find themselves fighting against some of their Indian neighbors from across the Canadian border.

With the return of more normal conditions following the War of 1812 the Quakers gave consideration to further expansion of their services to the Indians. They had made a start in teaching the men about farming, livestock raising, and building better homes. They had started the production of flax and the Indian women had proven themselves adept at spinning and weaving. In one year they wove 101 yards of cloth and sold it to white settlers. Following the war the matter of the Ogden Land Company "pre-emption rights" was again disturbing both the Indians and the Quakers. The wise counsel of Jacob Taylor materially aided in preserving the Indian lands intact. The Indian Committee in Philadelphia suggested that it might be wise for the Indians to shift from tribal ownership to private ownership of land in order to assure continued possession, but the Indians were not yet ready for such a move.

Friends felt that they must make a start in the education of Indian children. Joseph Harlan, a teacher at Tunesassa on the Allegany reservation, visited Cattaraugus in 1814 and remained for some months, but no mention is made of opening a school though the possibilities must have been explored. In a letter of December 16, 1816 Jacob Taylor proposed to the Committee that a school be set up. Two more years went by before Issachar Mann of London Grove, Pennsylvania arrived at Cattaraugus. He opened a school during the summer of 1818. On September 17, 1818 Jacob Taylor and Issachar Mann

reported, "The Cattaraugus Indians are favorably disposed towards the school which for the most part has been attended with as much regularity as could be expected." The next month they reported that the school at Cattaraugus had terminated favorably. Mann returned to his home in 1820 and the school was temporarily suspended until a new teacher could be found. Meanwhile a school building had been erected. At least a beginning had been made in introducing the white man's culture through classroom teaching. Very obviously, methods of teaching had to be adapted to the intellectual and cultural background of Indian children. Three decades later formal education had not made very impressive progress in the Indian community. Indians were wise in the ways of the forest and field. They were keen judges of human nature when gathered in the council ring. Within their own pattern of living they had a stern sense of justice. Only a few of the far-seeing Indian leaders were aware of the kind of education Indian children would need in the new order of society that had been thrust upon them. True education leads to and prepares the way for a ripening culture of which only the rudiments can be obtained in the class room.

Under Jacob Taylor's leadership the Quakers had helped the Indians through the first and perhaps the most difficult stage of adjustment to reservation life. After twenty-five years among the Indians he ended his service with the Indian Committee in 1821. No one of his experience and ability seemed to be available to assume responsibility. He purchased a small tract of the 700 acres of land he had done so much to develop over a twelve-year period. He assured the Indians that the school would continue and it did continue as teachers were available. The effort to make farmers after the white man's pattern was destined to achieve very limited results. These people who had made por-

tions of the Genesee valley "blossom as the rose" did not easily accommodate themselves to the new ways. Raising crops had been the work of women. Hoeing corn and care of livestock seemed to be a poor substitute for following the war path or the animal trail. The old initiative and the spirit of independence had been crushed. At best reservation life was, and still is, an abnormal state of society.

Within a few years of the withdrawal of the Philadelphia Indian Committee from the Cattaraugus reservation, the Hicksite separation took place within the Society of Friends. The Philadelphia Indian Committee came under the control of the Orthodox or Gurneyite branch. They continued their educational program on the Tunesassa reservation. Jacob Taylor, retired but still living on the Clear Creek farm, affiliated with the Hicksite Friends. A Baltimore Indian Committee of the Hicksite Friends interested themselves in the Cattaraugus reservation and undertook some educational work. As early as 1847 an attempt had been made to establish an orphanage for Indian children. However, it was left to Asher and Laura Wright, Presbyterians, who had come to Cattaraugus following the liquidation of the Buffalo Creek reservation in 1845, to gather a few Indian children together in 1855 and to start the institution that later became known as the Thomas Indian School.

Following the death of Jacob Taylor in 1839 the Philadelphia Indian Committee turned to members of Collins Monthly Meeting for custodians of the property, and they were delegated to care for the Committee's interests on the reservation. In 1841 Moses Varney, a local Friend, was operating the sawmill and Augustus Smith had charge of renting the farm land until its sale in 1850. Two nephews of Jacob Taylor settled in the town of Collins. Several of their descendants are active in local affairs and four are at present members of Collins Friends Meeting. On Au-

gust 24, 1958, a service was held in Collins Friends Meeting dedicated to the life and service of Jacob Taylor and marking the one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of his purchase of the Clear Creek property for the Indian Committee. Philip Taylor, representing members of the Taylor family

present, participated in the service of commemoration. A suitable historical marker was erected near where Jacob Taylor was buried on the land that was purchased of the Holland Land Company in 1808.

Spring Day at the Salisbury Press

by Bruce Swift

THE year 1825 was still too young for the people of this neighborhood to have begun to identify it with the hanging of the Thayers, the opening of the Erie Canal or the visit of General Lafayette to this part of the country with which they were to identify it in after years. As a matter of fact, none of these events had as yet taken place when, on a spring morning, Sheldon Ball climbed the stairs that led to the second floor of the Ebenezer Walden house which stood at the northeast corner of what are now Main and Eagle streets, to reach the Salisbury printing shop that occupied that floor. The Buffalo Book Store had space on the first floor of this building.

Hezekiah A. Salisbury had continued to run the press and to publish the *Buffalo Patriot* after his older brother, Smith H. Salisbury, had in 1818 withdrawn from the firm. Sheldon Ball arrived at the Salisbury office that day carrying two copper-plates of his own devising. From these he hoped prints might be made with which he could adorn his pamphlet, *Buffalo in 1825*. On one of these plates he had engraved a view of Buffalo harbor and on the other, a plan of the village.

Editor and printers had busied themselves that morning with their routine tasks. None of them seems to have dreamed that history-making events of even a local nature approached them in the person and plates of Sheldon Ball. Neither Hezekiah Salisbury nor any of his em-

ployees appear to have realized that they were about to confront problems that would strain their ingenuity and tax the facilities of the Salisbury establishment.

Sheldon Ball had planned to issue a guide to Buffalo, still an infant community, but he had not intended his work to produce merely a tourist's guidebook. Copy for the pamphlet contained "historical and statistical sketches" that made it more a history of Buffalo than a guide to the village. In fact, the pamphlet turned out to be the first history of Buffalo ever published here or elsewhere.

In a brief preface, the author told his readers why he had undertaken the task of preparing the pamphlet. "From the growing importance, the great demand, the daily inquiry by strangers for information in relation to the village of Buffalo; the author has been induced to exhibit this work to the public, with a hope, that it may answer their purpose until such time as some other person, may take up the subject and do it ample justice." Not until 1864 did another person take up the task; that was William Ketchum.

Some rumor of the difficulties the Salisbury printers faced that spring day when Sheldon Ball brought them his copper-plates, or some legend originating in that event, seems to have lingered on in this community long after the participants in it had ceased to exist. At any rate, fifty years after the Salisbury Press had pub-

lished *Buffalo in 1825*, with its "View of Buffalo Harbor" and its folding "Plan of the Village of Buffalo," Orasmus H. Marshall wrote to the son of Sheldon Ball, who lived in Erie, Pennsylvania, seeking information about the pamphlet. It should be said in passing that Mr. Marshall collected quantities of material and wrote extensively on the history of the Niagara Frontier. He was a founder and one-time President of the Buffalo Historical Society and one of the chief contributors to its historical collections.

His seeking in this guidebook matter was not in vain. Looking through his papers, Gideon J. Ball found two copies of his father's pamphlet, *Buffalo in 1825*, and several copies of the "View of Buffalo Harbor". Sending to Mr. Marshall the more perfect of the two copies of the pamphlet and a copy of the "View of Buffalo Harbor," he wrote an account of the difficulties the Salisbury printers faced and the way they attacked the problems with which his father's home-made copper-plates had confronted them. This letter, in the archives of the Buffalo Historical Society, remains the primary source of our information about the events in the Salisbury office that spring day that fathered the rumor or mothered the legend that lingered for half a century in these parts.

Facsimiles of Sheldon Ball's "View of Buffalo Harbor," as seen from The Terrace at a point between what are now Main and Franklin streets, and his folding "Plan of the Village of Buffalo" can be found in the first volume of the Society's *Publications*. The one faces page 139 and the other, about twice the size of a pamphlet-page, is folded between pages 150 and 151. The pages between them bear the guidebook material of the original pamphlet.

When Sheldon Ball had completed his pencil drawings of the harbor and the village, he wrote to engraving concerns in New York City to learn what they would charge to put these sketches on copper-

plates. Their replies showed him at once that these charges, taken with transportation costs and difficulties, were beyond his means. He had made his sketches because he felt that they would contribute to the value of his pamphlet. Being reluctant to publish it without these adornments, he determined to see what he could do as an engraver of copper-plates.

His first task was not a difficult one; he readily secured a sheet of copper from which he could fashion the necessary plates. The plate for his "View of Buffalo Harbor" needed to be but half the size of the one required for his "Plan of the Village of Buffalo." Having secured the copper, his next task was to hammer the plates to the required thinness. This accomplished, he set himself to the job of polishing these plates. "By infinite rubbing their surfaces were finished so that they presented polished planes." This done, he turned to the more trying and difficult work of transferring his sketches to these "polished plates."

Neither an artist nor an engraver, Sheldon Ball set about his task in a high hope, though well aware that he lacked the skill engravers must have to reproduce on a copper surface an artist's work. Patiently, persistently, with infinite pains he accomplished what at first must have appeared to him to be well nigh impossible. Having thus completed his plates he carried them, that spring morning, to the Salisbury shop.

When he left his house that morning, his way seemed clear before him. That it was not clear he soon learned from his experience there. He had carried his plates to the *Patriot* office anticipating the delight that should be his as copy after copy of his "View" and his "Plan" came from the press. That such should be the case was not written in the events of the day. The printers "pressed" but the plates yielded no imprints. Experiment showed all concerned that their newspaper press would not print from copper-plates.

Disappointed but not discouraged by their failure, those pioneer printers rigged a press they thought would serve, only to find that the ordinary printer's ink would not work on copper-plates. They consulted their books where they found a formula for making the right sort of ink, but still another hurdle remained to be cleared. They learned, also, that the new ink would be effective "only on a copper-plate printing press, one with large lignum vitae rollers, an upper and a lower one."

Of course, they did not expect to find such rollers anywhere in a pioneer village like Buffalo; if the oldest printing office in the community did not have them where could they expect to find them? To obtain them from New York was out of the question. The cost of the rollers and of transportation would send the cost of the printing job sky-high. Still, those pioneer printers were not beaten, nor was Sheldon Ball to be disappointed.

The printers, though pioneers or because they were pioneers, showed themselves again independent of the metropolis. They turned to the mechanics and the mechanics said that buttonwood would serve the purpose of lignum vitae as rollers. They sought a buttonwood tree of usable diameter. They cut two roller-lengths from this. They carried these to the lathe in the mechanic's shop where he

turned them down to the right diameter. Returned to the Salisbury office, the printers then fashioned a plate-bed for the press they had rigged up for printing from copper-plates. Then, with the new ink they had made for the purpose and on the new press they had devised, the Salisbury printers brought to publication:

B U F F A L O
in
1825:
containing
historical and statistical sketches
illustrated
WITH A MAP OF THE VILLAGE
and
VIEW OF THE HARBOR

B U F F A L O :
Published by S. Ball
H. A. Salisbury, Printer
1825

And how did Sheldon Ball fare in the sale of his guidebook to Buffalo? "The larger part of the edition was given away; a limited number were sold for twenty-five cents each. I think I am safe in saying that not five (5) per cent of the cost of the work was ever realized by S. Ball." So wrote his son in his letter to Orsamus Marshall, fifty years after the publication of his "Father's hobby."

Buffalo Theatres — 1898 to 1908

by Charles S. Illingworth

SIXTY years ago Buffalo was a very important theatrical city, boasting of seven legitimate theatres at which two hundred or more companies with live performers playing drama, musicals, melodramas, vaudeville, and burlesque played each season of forty weeks from September to June, as well as stock companies during the summer.

[*Forty-two*]

New shows were given their "try outs" here as well, as it was conceded that if a show succeeded in Buffalo, it would be a success in New York. I can remember Victor Herbert directing the orchestra for the opening of "It Happened in Nordland" at the Star Theatre. The Star and Teck Theatres played such leading stars as Richard Mansfield in "If I Were King",

E. H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe in Shakespeare, John Drew, Nat Goodwin, James K. Hackett, Mrs. Leslie Carter in "Zaza," Eleanor Robson, Maude Adams, Viola Allen, and Julia Arthur in various dramas. Among the musicals, "Floradora" with its famous sextette "Tell Me Pretty Maiden", and "Babes In Toyland" by Victor Herbert, from which "The March of the Wooden Soldiers" is still played, were outstanding hits. The "Bostonians" played De Koven's "Robin Hood" with the song "Oh, Promise Me", which became a classic. Anna Held returned each year in a new musical.

The comedians featured in musical comedies were, to mention a few, Frank Daniels, Sam Bernard, The Roger Brothers, De Wolf Hopper, Eddie Foy, and Francis Wilson. The stars were Alice Nielson, Pauline Hall, Christie MacDonald Marie Cahill, Marguerite Clark, Fritzi Scheff and so many others that it would fill this page just to enumerate them.

In 1907 "The Merry Widow" played here, and anybody who saw it will always remember the wonderful duet and waltz, sung and danced by Prince Danilo and Sonia at the close of the second act. The same year brought the first of Ziegfeld's "Follies," a new type of review which featured beautiful girls and the best comedians, continuing for twenty years.

These productions played six nights and two matinees a week, no Sunday performance, at prices of two dollars down to fifty cents. Gentlemen wore white ties and tails, and the ladies wore evening gowns.

After matinees, lines of women, mostly from nearby Central High School, waited outside the stage door on Genesee street, for a glimpse of their favorite "Matinee Idol".

The Lyceum Theatre on Washington street, between Mohawk and Broadway, and the Academy Theatre on Main street, near Seneca, played drama and melodrama, some of them rather lurid, but those at the Lyceum were a little higher

class. Such titles as "The Span of Life," "Across the Pacific", "Way Down East", not to overlook "East Lynn", were shown at the Lyceum, while at the Academy the plays were more sensational: the heroine about to be cut in half by a buzz saw, or fastened to a railroad track, or the mortgage on the homestead about to be foreclosed unless she consents to wed the villain . . . is saved from a "fate worse than death" by the hero, who always arrives in the nick of time. Virtue is always triumphant, the villain is foiled and gets his deserts, the hero and heroine live happily ever after. The titles suggest the plot of the play; "Bertha, the Sewing Machine Girl", "Nellie, the Beautiful Cloak Model", "Queen of the Opium Ring", and "Over the Quarry Brink", the last-named based on a local murder mystery. These plays were performed by traveling road companies whose players never attained top ranking in the "profession". In these two theatres the admission was quite low, and were largely patronized by the working people.

Shea's and vaudeville were synonymous in Buffalo. Prior to 1900, Shea's Garden Theatre, a one-story theatre, was opened on Pearl Street, next to the Morgan Building, extending through to Franklin Street. The bill of seven acts consisted of singers, monologists, musical acts, a sketch and acrobats. Two performances were given daily, matinee and evening. The prices were fifty cents in the evening (twenty-five-cent matinees) for any seat in the house. This was within my means, and I attended once or sometimes twice a week. From the day of its opening until the passing of vaudeville Mr. Shea insisted upon clean acts; no profanity, no suggestive words or acts were tolerated, and the entertainment was of the highest quality. It had a ten-piece orchestra, directed by Henry Marcus.

Among the acts I recall at this early date were; Della Fox, attired in white trousers, blue coat, and yachting cap,

smoking a cigarette (the first time I had seen a woman smoke), and with a blond curl in the middle of her forehead. She sang, "A shady nook,/ A babbling brook,/ A moon, serenely mellow./ Swear to be true?/ I do, I do/ Tut, tut, you naughty fellow." "Again the nook,/ Once more the brook,/ Same moon, and all is well-oh./ But if you took/ Another look,/ You'd find a different fellow." George (Honey Boy) Evans, in black face, who composed and sang "In The Good Old Summer Time"; Eddie Leonard, an old-time minstrel, who was a wonderful soft shoe dancer; and the "Four Cohans", Jerry, the father, Helen, the mother, Josephine, the sister, and George M., who wrote, produced and starred in musical farces later on.

A few years later Mr. Shea razed the old Court Street Theatre and erected a new theatre on the site, next to Denton, Cottier and Daniels. The new building had a balcony, and although intended for vaudeville, it opened with a summer stock company, starring William Farnum, who had played the title role in "Ben Hur", and his brother, Dustin Farnum, who starred in the "Virginian". After the summer stock season was finished, vaudeville again took the boards and held sway until its final closing.

Evening prices were raised to seventy-five cents, but matinees remained at twenty-five cents. There were many actors who played vaudeville year after year, never attempting to appear in musicals or what was called the legitimate stage. Some of the best liked were Mr. and Mrs. Perkins Fischer (in a sketch called "The Half-Way House"), Cressy and Dane, Nat Wills (in a tramp monologue), Clayton White, and Marie Stuart. Others played a few weeks of vaudeville between their regular shows, such as Elsie Janis, billed as "the Child imitator", McIntyre and Heath, as "the Georgia Minstrels", Cissie Loftus, Digby Bell, Gallagher and Shean, and many, many others.

[Forty-four]

Each show ended with either an animal act such as "Howard's Ponies" or a troupe of acrobats, followed by a news reel, during which the audience gathered their wraps and left the theatre. None of us realized that the "despised flickers" would someday displace the live theatre.

Last on the list is burlesque. Not burlesque as it is known today in a few theatres in not many cities, with its "strip tease" dancers(?) and the so called "comics" with their vulgar jokes and suggestive actions, but a real entertainment with modestly costumed principals and chorus, and comedians who were really funny. Burlesque was the best school for the comedian. Here he learned to attract and hold the attention of a rowdy audience. The stock characters were, the Dutchman, who invariably used German dialect, the Jewish comic, made up as a bearded, sloppy, stingy old man, and the Dude, casually regarded as a sissy. The chorus wore tights, as did the "leading lady" in the final act, this in the days when ladies' dresses reached the ground.

The old Court Street Theatre played traveling burlesque companies until 1902, when the old Lafayette Presbyterian Church on Broadway near Main Street was remodeled into a theatre; the shows that formerly played at Court Street then played at the new Lafayette Theatre. When Mr. Shea moved vaudeville to his new theatre on Court street, the old Garden theatre was taken over by burlesque, there being two wheels, or circuits, the Columbia or Eastern and the Empire or Western. At one time Buffalo had two burlesques each week, one at the Lafayette, the other playing at the Garden.

To mention a few of the burlesque companies, there were the "BonTons", Rose Sydell's "London Belles", "The Jolly Grass Widows", The "Knickerbockers" and Billy Watson's "Beef Trust". Each girl in the last named company weighed at least 175 pounds, and had such fat legs that she could not really dance.

The wage for a chorus girl ranged from \$15.00 to \$18.00 a week.

The comedians by hard work and original ideas graduated from burlesque into Broadway musical comedies. Among them were Sam Bernard, Leon Errol, Jack Pearl, Bert Lahr, Ed Lee Wrothe and David Warfield. Few talented women burlesquers had a chance for advancement. Among the limited number of those who did reach Broadway were Fanny Brice and Sophie Tucker.

The regular season for traveling theatrical troupes ended in June, when the actors returned to New York to make arrangements for the next season, selecting new plays and taking vacations. During the summer many stock companies were formed with professional actors who wished to earn additional income during the slack season. Acting in stock was hard work but excellent training. The bill was changed each week, which meant that while acting in this week's play, the actor was rehearsing next week's show and reading and memorizing the following week's attraction.

Buffalo was favored by two stock companies which played here year after year during the summer. One was the Baldwin-Melville, which played at the Teck Theatre; the other was the Jessie Bonstelle Company which played at the Star Theatre. Dr. Cornell was the house manager of the Star Theatre, and his daughter, Katherine Cornell, made her first stage appearance in the Bonstelle Company, and went on from there to become America's foremost actress. It is an admitted fact that all the distinguished actors and actresses received their early training in some stock company.

Each of these theatres had a permanent orchestra of eight or ten pieces that played between the acts of the dramas. These orchestras were augmented for musical productions. At the vaudeville and burlesque theatres the orchestra was in the pit, throughout the performance.

All orchestras had rehearsals on Monday morning, at which time the vaudeville acts brought their music and instructed the director on any special musical effects they wished during their act.

Each burlesque company carried a musical director who attended the rehearsal and issued instructions for special effects, and had the orchestra play certain numbers in which he had altered the tempo or accent. I was never fortunate enough to attend the orchestra rehearsal for a musical comedy. I was impressed by the fact that no rehearsal was needed for popular music, except as noted above. All the musicians played from the score as written, not distorted or mutilated by arrangers as it is today.

On Monday morning the special scenery was brought from the railroad to the various theatres by the O. J. Glenn Company on a specially built truck. This truck was as long as a modern automobile transport, and the scenery was unloaded at a door, as wide as a barn door, opening directly upon the stage. The Glenn Co. also delivered the trunks of the performers which bore a large label reading "Theatre" or "Hotel". The name of the company was also lettered on the lid.

The Barnes Hotel on Pearl Street, next to the Star Theatre, the Imperial Hotel on Genesee Street, where the Y.M.C.A. now stands, and the Hermitage Hotel on Court and Franklin Streets were known as theatrical hotels, and other hotels made special rates to actors, while on Pearl and Franklin Streets and Delaware Avenue were numerous rooming houses patronized by actors. The average cost of a room was three or four dollars a week. A dinner could be had for twenty-five cents.

The theatrical companies paid the railroad fares and furnished the costumes, but the performers had to furnish their own makeup kits and tights.

The theatre fascinated me. From my early teens, I spent much of my time around a theatre; every time I could get

[*Forty-five*]

a quarter, or more, I would go to some show, vaudeville, burlesque or, when I could afford it, something better at the Star or the Teck. It did not matter as long as I could enjoy the actors, the lights, and music. I went to the Lyceum and the Academy only two or three times, as I did not care for melodrama, but I seldom missed a musical. I even skipped the afternoon session of school to see plays.

Going as often as I did I became acquainted with box office men, ticket takers, members of the orchestra, and as years passed, stage managers and even some of the performers. I had no illusions. There was no aura surrounding these people connected with the theatre.

I had no desire to become an actor or to be connected with the theatre, but I took delight in associating with them and enjoyed their conversation, especially "shop talk". Some shows I saw so many times I knew the dialogue, and I memorized the routine of many a monologist from hearing the act. I knew the words and tunes of all the songs; some of them I remember to this day.

The love of the theatre has never left me, that is why I regret the passing of "live" theatre. Neither motion pictures, television, nor any other substitute can replace real actors who took pride in their profession.



"WIPE THE SLATE CLEAN"

The period of slate and slate pencil has long gone by, but memories of this are still vivid to some of us. I recall at five years of age there were two so-called elementary kindergarten-type schools situated within a block of my home. One was presided over by a tall handsome lady with gray hair and gray eyes, Miss Harvey, and the other was presided over by Kenny Kemmerling. She had a brother who was a doctor. This was the slate and pencil period in both of these schools.

In an effort to get away from salivary cleaning of slates both teachers were trying to educate children to use water and they had Florence flasks with pipes: one was for pouring and one was to let the air into the flask. So when the teacher said "Wipe the slates clean," she would proceed around the room with her flask and give each child a trickle of water and the child would wipe it clean with a cloth.

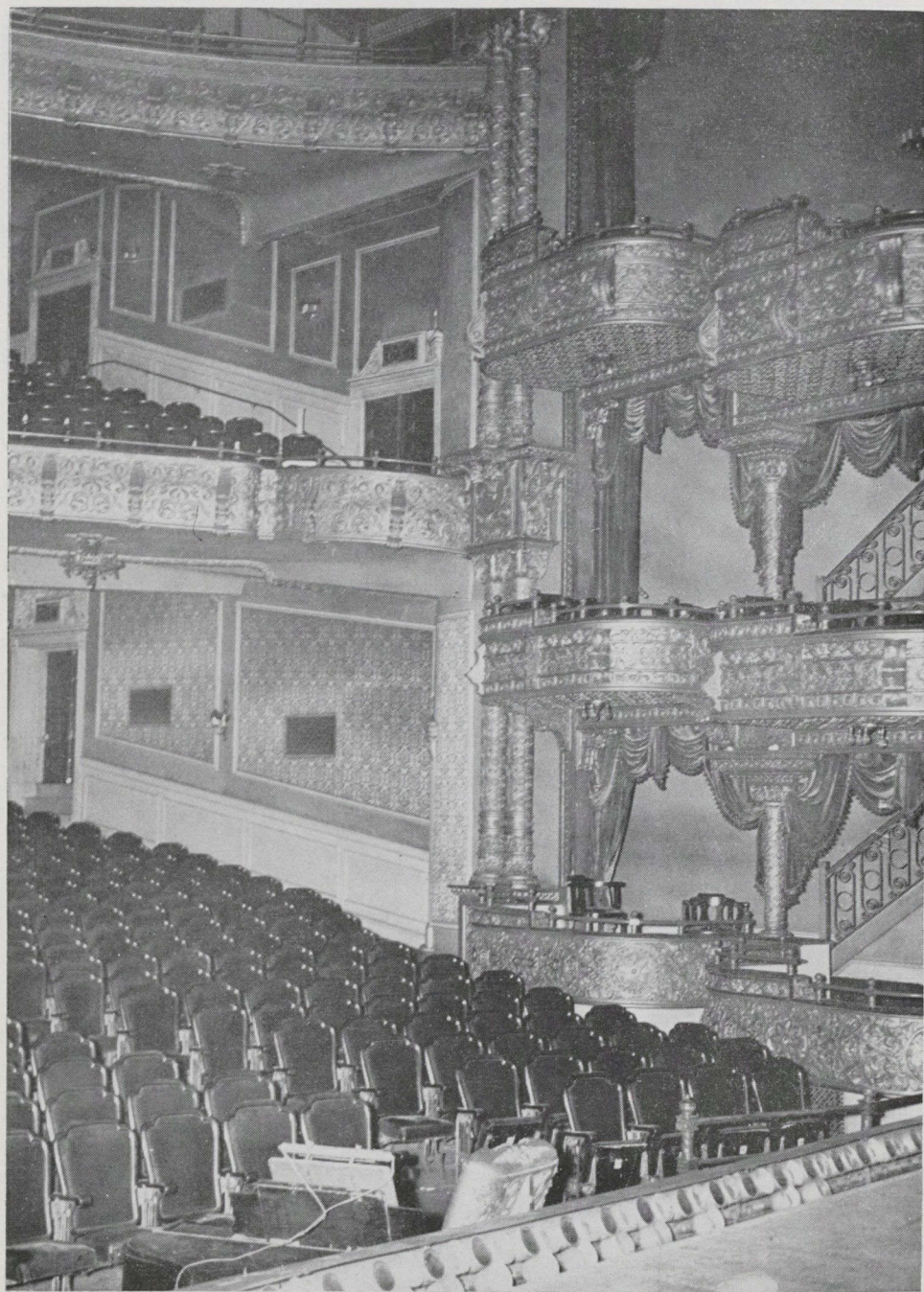
Miss Harvey of the first school had missed one of the boys, not giving him any water, and when her back was turned he proceeded to use saliva. She caught him and went over and gripped him by the ear to take him to the front as an exemplary punishment. He gave her a blackeye. Wipe the slate clean was, therefore, not always without danger.

WILLIAM F. JACOBS



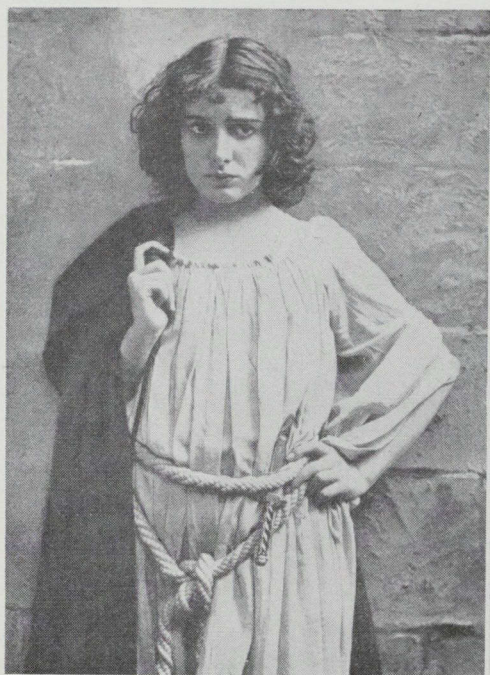
The Lyceum Theatre as originally built. It was remodeled later, in 1912-1913.

[Forty-seven]



Traditional theatre interior decoration: the Teck theatre, taken by Elizabeth Kahle, photograph acquired by the Society 1941.

[Forty-eight]



A group of stars familiar to Buffalo theatres. Upper: Julia Marlowe and Katherine Cornell. Lower: John Drew and Maude Adams.



Unveiling the marker on Elmwood Avenue of the old Pierce-Arrow factory, August 1, 1959. From left to right: Mr. G. M. Tinney, President of the Tinney-Cadillac Company and of the Buffalo Automobile Dealers Association; Miss Marjorie Baker, Executive Secretary of the Association; Dr. Julian Park, President of the Buffalo Historical Society; Dr. I. Frank Mogavero and Mr. Robert B. Meech of the Society's Committee on Markers.

Joseph Ellicott and the Grand Canal

by William Chazanof

ELLICOTT, as has been pointed out in previous articles¹ on his work in western New York, was far more than a salesman of raw land. As early as 1808 he saw the enormous potentialities of what was to be known as the Erie Canal, and although he did not by any means invent the idea of a canal (it had been talked about for fifty years by several men) he nevertheless took an effective part in its construction. Since this is not generally known, and for good reasons connected with important episodes in Buffalo history, it may be well to review the events in detail so that proper credit may be assigned.

Ellicott's first interest in the canal was, naturally, that it would increase the sale of Holland Land Company land, and as Resident Agent, with his office at Batavia, he would be less than human to overlook the possibility. Even better, it would cost the Company very little. Road building was proving to be a slow and strenuous task (*Niagara Frontier*, Autumn 1958) but each year made clearer the necessity for transport to the eastern markets. Ellicott decided to act just as the plans for the canal began to take shape.

When the State Legislature of New York had directed the State Surveyor, Simeon DeWitt, to examine the most suitable all-water route between the Hudson River and Lake Erie, he turned to Joseph Ellicott for counsel. DeWitt sought Ellicott's advice in the selection of the route and asked his opinion concerning the "practicability" of a canal.

The surveys which you possess must enable you better than any other person, to form a judgment of the practicability of the project. Will you have the

goodness to give me your opinion? Perhaps you may possess information to give me something in a detailed way on the subject, which I might annex to my report I am to make for the U.S. Government, for the purpose of showing the feasibility of such a canal.²

Before responding to DeWitt, Ellicott discussed the idea of a canal with Agent-General Busti. He praised the project and stressed the points that a waterway could be built at small expense and that it would greatly increase the value of Company lands. "I think," Ellicott concluded,

... we might fairly estimate the Holland Company's Property here at \$1,000,000 higher if the Canal should be made sufficiently large to admit the Boats to navigate it capable of carrying from twenty to thirty tons Burthen than the Property can be estimated at present. And I am clearly of the Opinion that a Canal might be excavated by this Route with comparatively small expense to what it might round the Niagara to Lake Ontario and from thence to Oneida Lakes.³

After informing Busti of his position on the matter, Ellicott answered DeWitt's request for information. First, he carefully examined three possible routes: one swinging around Niagara Falls; a second moving down the Niagara River from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario; and a third connecting the Genesee River with Lake

2. Simeon DeWitt to Joseph Ellicott, June 13, 1808, in the *Correspondence on the Holland Land Company and Canal Construction in Western New York*, ed. by Frank H. Severance, Vol. XIV of the Buffalo Historical Society Publications (1910), p. 4. Hereafter cited as Volume XIV.

3. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, July 16, 1808, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society.

1. *Niagara Frontier*, Vol. IV, pp. 101-112; Vol. V, pp. 9-17, 57-65.

Erie. Then he eliminated the first two possibilities and supported the third route. With typical efficiency, he approximated the water depths and the lock requirements, estimated the cost of excavation per mile, and even included a map for the western sector. Finally, as proof of his confidence in the practicability of the project, he offered to invest \$2,500 in a company organized to build the proposed waterway.⁴ Ellicott's recommendations revealed his vast and accurate knowledge of western New York. His final selection of a route also coincided with the best interests of the Holland Company, for the canal would pass through the purchase.

In addition to charging DeWitt with the selection of a route, the resolution of 1808 specified that he should assume the responsibility of having a survey made of the proposed waterway. Upon DeWitt's orders, James Geddes, a surveyor, made this survey and reported to the Legislature that the canal was practicable and that the state could afford to build it. Impressed by the possibilities inherent in a canal, the State Legislature in 1810, by joint resolution, appointed a canal commission of the following members: Gouverneur Morris, William North, Thomas Eddy, Stephen Van Rensselaer, Simeon DeWitt, DeWitt Clinton, and Peter B. Porter. The lawmakers directed the Canal Commissioners to explore an entire route for inland navigation from the Hudson River to Lake Erie and Lake Ontario; with the establishment of this formal board, the Legislature started in earnest a canal program for the State of New York.⁵

4. Joseph Ellicott to Simeon DeWitt, July 30, 1808, in Vol. XIV (the *Correspondence on the Holland Land Company and Canal Construction in Western New York*) pp. 4-16.

5. Turner, *Pioneer History of the Holland Purchase of Western New York*, p. 623; Hammond, *The History of Political Parties in the State of New York*, I, 302.

[Fifty-two]

Even before the Legislature had appointed the Canal Board, Agent-General Busti, in an effort to encourage the construction of a canal, offered to donate Company lands to the State. Proceeds from the sale of such lands could be used to finance the proposed waterway. Although Busti had previously opposed the construction of canals and advocated the opening of a few main roads, he reversed himself after Ellicott went on record as favoring the project. He endorsed his Resident-Agent's stand by offering "every other Lot adjoining each side of the said Canal in its passage through the Holland Company's Lands."⁶ Each lot contained one hundred and sixty acres, so that the total Company grant would amount to eighteen thousand acres.

In the early part of 1812, the Canal Commission rejected Busti's offer, feeling that the special conditions that were attached to it prevented final acceptance. These conditions specified that the canal would have to extend from Lake Erie to the Seneca River; it would have to accommodate boats with twenty-ton loads; the federal or state government would have to build the canal; and the Company would not be responsible for the release of the land until construction of the canal had actually started.

The Canal Commission felt that Busti's proposals needed clarification. The Commissioners insisted that the land be donated at once and, certainly, prior to the initial construction. The Company, on the other hand, could not release the lots until the Commissioners had laid out the route; for, if it did so, it might be sacrificing immediate opportunities to sell this land to private purchasers. Faced with this difficulty, the Commissioners countered Busti's offer by requesting a definite block of land that would "at once

6. Joseph Ellicott to Simeon DeWitt, November 19, 1808, Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society.

be located.” Busti, a trifle uncertain of his next step, suggested that the Company might offer half a township, which was three miles square, in the neighborhood of the canal.⁷

When Thomas Eddy, the distinguished philanthropist, Canal Commissioner, and friend of Ellicott, urged him to support a larger land donation, the Resident-Agent decided to table Busti’s offer of half a township and suggested, instead, a larger land grant. Eddy had given this advice because he believed that such generosity on the part of the Company would help to offset the criticism that the canal would mainly benefit the large landowners. Moreover, he reminded Ellicott, the land grant would help to finance the canal construction. The new block of land which Ellicott proposed to donate to the State, therefore, covered an area of over one hundred thousand acres, in contrast to the half a township of eleven thousand five hundred acres which Busti had suggested. With a practical man’s consideration of the importance of the dollar sign and of public relations, Ellicott pointed out to Busti that such a donation would serve the Company in several ways: a larger grant would establish better rapport between the Company and the public; it would rid their organization of poor land that was not likely to be sold for some time; and it would comply with the Commission’s request for a grant that “could at once be located.” He explained further that the Company might later receive compensation for Busti’s half a township adjoining the canal, a substantial sum that it would stand to lose if an outright grant of this property were prematurely made to the State.

Busti studied this plan with all the caution of a man accustomed to the deli-

cate balances of land values, and then, convinced of its merit, he endorsed the land grant that Ellicott had recommended. The Company then offered to donate 100,632 acres in the region that Ellicott suggested. The donation stipulated that the State would have to pay taxes on this land, and return the land to the Company if it did not build the canal within fifteen years. This offer the Canal Commission accepted on November 27, 1813.⁸

While the Company and the Canal Board ironed out their differences over the land donation that was to assist in financing the canal, Ellicott faced the equally troublesome problems involved in the selection of the canal route in western New York. He wanted a waterway that passed through the Company lands, for in this way the Company would profit from the project. Peter B. Porter, however, favored a canal route that facilitated trade on the Great Lakes, and sought a passage by way of Lake Ontario. The Ontario route would aid the Great Lakes shipping firm of Porter, Barton and Company since it had a twenty-year contract with the State of New York that gave the Company a trade monopoly on the Niagara River and over the Portage Road.⁹ In the ensuing clash, Porter had the good fortune to be one of the Canal Commissioners; this initial advantage was offset, however, when the Board authorized Ellicott to make the recommendation of a route, and he persuaded the Board to select one favorable to his Company. In 1811, the Canal Board reported to the State Legislature that it favored a canal route directly to Buffalo, in preference to Oswego on Lake Ontario.¹⁰

8. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, July 12, December 30, 1813, *ibid.*, pp. 27-36.

9. John T. Horton and others, *History of Northwestern New York* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Incorporated, 1947), Vol. II, 19.

10. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti; June 9, 1810, July 15, 1812; Chauncey Loomis to Joseph Ellicott, Ellicott Collection.

7. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, March 30, 1812, *ibid.*; Paul Busti to Joseph Ellicott, May 4, 1812, in Vol. XIV, the *Correspondence on the Holland Company and Canal Construction in Western New York*, p. 22.

Action by the Legislature authorizing borrowing for construction caused the opponents of the canal project to speak up vehemently and from different quarters. The inhabitants of eastern New York felt jealous of western New York; residents around Lake Ontario demanded that the canal route go to Oswego; and several leaders of the southern counties that bordered Pennsylvania saw no personal gains from the canal and resented paying additional taxes to help western New York. Tammany Hall opposed the canal because its enemy, DeWitt Clinton, favored it. In 1814, these opponents united and, using the war as an excuse, persuaded the Legislature to rescind the authority of the Commission to borrow the money from Europe.¹¹

While the war delayed further progress in the building of the canal, at the same time it dramatically revealed the need for such a waterway. Only with the greatest difficulty and at the slowest pace and with great expense did the army transport arms and ammunition to protect the western frontier from another British invasion.

At this point DeWitt Clinton came forward. A Canal Commissioner since 1810, he had trained himself to be expert on the subject. He had traveled extensively over the suggested canal route in 1810 and knew well the topography; he had also added to his knowledge of the subject by considerable reading. With the end of the war, he united the unorganized proponents of the canal. This he did by writing and distributing his famous memorial of December 1815, a brochure that demonstrated convincingly the advantages of such a waterway. A committee sent copies throughout the state. When the Legislature finally received it in March 1816,

over one hundred thousand people had signed the petition to build the canal.

Ellicott moved swiftly in support of Clinton's memorial. He organized mass meetings and encouraged Jonas Harrison, collector of customs for the District of Niagara, to add his influence at a meeting that Buffalo had planned. He sent a map with plans for the canal to Senator Chauncey Loomis, a nephew by marriage, telling him that he hoped the Legislature would pass a bill to build the waterway, and sent William Rumsey to Albany to lobby for the canal.¹²

Despite the clamor and pressure for a canal, the State Legislature passed a bill that instructed the Commissioners merely to study the canal project further. Governor Tompkins, in his annual message of that year, mentioned the canal but did not urge that the Legislature appropriate the needed funds for construction. The Commission in March 1816, recommended, as it had in 1812, that the State begin to build the canal. Later that month, Rutzen Van Rensselaer introduced a bill that provided for the immediate construction of the Erie and Champlain Canals. In April, the House considered the bill and, after making a few changes, passed it. Martin Van Buren in the Senate successfully amended the bill so that the Commissioners could not begin immediate construction. After considerable haggling, both houses accepted the Senate bill on the last day of the session. The act in its final form ordered the Commissioners to make additional surveys to examine further the costs involved, and to study ways in which the State could issue the necessary bonds. Thus the Legislature had again postponed

11. Turner, *Pioneer History of the Holland Purchase of Western New York*, pp. 623, 624; A. F. Harlow, *Old Towpaths, The Story of the American Canal Era*, (New York, D. A. Appleton and Company, 1926), p. 48.

12. Memorandum, January 31, 1816, C. W. Evans Papers, Buffalo Historical Society; Joseph Ellicott to William Peacock, February 5, 1816, Ellicott Collection; Joseph Ellicott to Chauncey Loomis, February 14, 1816, *ibid.*; Joseph Ellicott to Chauncey Loomis, February 21, 1816, to Jonas Harrison, February 12, 1816, Vol. XIV, pp. 43, 47, 48.

the actual construction of the canal. The 1816 Legislature also decided to appoint a new group of Canal Commissioners and to reduce the number of Commissioners to five.

When Ellicott learned that the Legislature planned to alter the Canal Board membership, he acted quickly to influence the lawmakers in their selection of a Commissioner from western New York. He wanted James W. Stevens to replace Peter B. Porter because Porter had supported the Oswego route instead of the Buffalo one. Porter's mercantile interests clashed with Ellicott's desires to attract farmer-settlers. Further, Stevens, as the Company clerk, had served Ellicott with undeviating loyalty.¹³ Ellicott instructed Chauncey Loomis to use his Senatorial influence to obtain Stevens' appointment. To Loomis, Ellicott admitted that the real reason for preferring Stevens to Porter stemmed from the fact that the Company could control Stevens.¹⁴

Ellicott did succeed in obtaining a Canal Commissioner sympathetic to the Company. It was not Stevens, however; for, by a strange tug of destiny, he found *himself* appointed one of the five Canal Commissioners. The appointment surprised Ellicott for he "had not the most distant expectation of being named as a commissioner." In addition to Ellicott, the Legislature chose DeWitt Clinton, Myron Holley, Samuel Young, and Stephen Van Rensselaer.¹⁵

Ellicott and DeWitt Clinton worked closely and harmoniously at this time. When Clinton asked Ellicott for suggestions for the waterway, Ellicott offered two practical ideas: the Legislature should ap-

point a small group of Commissioners to prepare a sample route that would include bridges, docks, and excavations; and the Legislature should not employ foreigners because Americans knew better the business management techniques in this country. Ellicott also suggested various methods to raise money for the canal. Altruistically, he included a tax on bachelors despite the fact that he was unmarried; but he excluded any tax on landowners.

Clinton was impressed with Ellicott's proposals and confided in him. He blamed Tompkins for the split in the Republican party, and accused him of "shrinking from responsibility" in the canal project. He felt that Ellicott's suggestions regarding the canal "will I have no doubts be adopted either on this or future occasion." He found the lobbying of Colonel Rumsey, whom Ellicott had sent to Albany, "active and useful."¹⁶

Meanwhile the work of surveying the canal route went forward. Clinton examined the eastern sector and found "its practicability beyond all manner of doubt." The Commissioners next had to lay out a route from the Genesee River to Buffalo Creek. Ellicott knew the great importance of this route to the Company and appreciated its role in the overall canal battle. He had won the first round in 1812 when he had persuaded the Commissioners to recommend a direct route to Buffalo and Lake Erie, rather than to Oswego and Lake Ontario. Now he wanted to locate this canal route so that it ran through as much of the Company land as possible. This latest survey required that a detailed examination of the route be made, in contrast to the broad view resulting from the

13. Joseph Ellicott to Archibald McIntyre, April 1, 1816, in Vol. XIV, p. 56.

14. Joseph Ellicott to Chauncey Loomis, April 1, 1816, *ibid.* p. 55.

15. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, May 13, 1816, in Vol. XIV, p. 63; *Laws of the State of New York, 39th Session*, p. 295 (April 17, 1816).

16. DeWitt Clinton to Joseph Ellicott, January 1816, Ellicott Collection; Joseph Ellicott to DeWitt Clinton, February 21, 1816, *ibid.*; Joseph Ellicott to DeWitt Clinton, March 25, 1816, DeWitt Clinton Papers, Columbia University; DeWitt Clinton to Joseph Ellicott, April 4, 1816, *ibid.*; DeWitt Clinton to Joseph Ellicott, March 15, 1816, in Vol. XIV, p. 51.

1812 recommendation. With this in mind, Ellicott offered to organize a party "to trace a line for the canal from Lake Erie" to the Genesee River.¹⁷

In July 1816 the Canal Commissioners accepted Ellicott's offer. Ellicott found a feasible route that ran through Genesee and Niagara Counties. Carefully, he investigated the reported "insurmountable obstacles," assigning William Peacock as the engineer and his nephew, Andrew A. Ellicott as the surveyor.¹⁸

The Commissioners had two routes in the west from which to choose: a northern and a southern. To complicate matters, the Commission had already employed an engineer to lay out the northern route. Ellicott favored the southern, so he tested his ideas scientifically. He stationed Peacock at Tonawanda Creek for an entire week to gauge the amount of water. Deliberately, Ellicott chose the driest time of the year to determine whether the Creek had enough water to fill a lock. Peacock's findings convinced Ellicott that Tonawanda Creek could promise enough water "to fill a lock 75 feet in length, 16 feet in breadth and 12 feet in depth in less than four minutes and 50 seconds which in 24 hours would admit the passage through the locks at each end of the summit canal respectively to the number of 148 boats." Ellicott estimated that the cost of the southern route would be some three hundred thousand dollars less than that of the northern.¹⁹

17. DeWitt Clinton to Joseph Ellicott, September 20, 1816, Ellicott Collection; Joseph Ellicott to Thomas Eddy, May 6, 1816, *ibid.*; Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, June 21, 1817, in Vol. XIV, p. 126.

18. Joseph Ellicott to DeWitt Clinton, September 2, 1816, January 18, 1817, *ibid.*, pp. 68, 101; Joseph Ellicott to Samuel Young, October 24, 1816, *ibid.*, p. 73; Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, June 21, 1817, *ibid.*, p. 126.

19. Joseph Ellicott to Samuel Young, October 24, 1816, *ibid.*, p. 75; Joseph Ellicott to

Six months after the Commissioners had given Ellicott his instructions he presented a detailed report minutely tracing the exact route, and estimated costs for its sections. To his delight the Commissioners submitted these to the Legislature. He confided to Busti that the Company stood to gain some one million two hundred thousand dollars if the Legislature adopted his route.²⁰

Busti continued to doubt that the canal would ever be built, but the Act of 1816 providing for the survey revived the question of a land donation. The Company's offer of a grant of land in 1812 had become void in 1814. For some time Busti refrained from making another definite land offer but at last, on February 22, 1817, he grudgingly renewed his proposal of 1812.²¹

In 1817 the tide turned and the canal was won. The day after the Legislature approved the construction of the canal, Clinton sent a congratulatory letter to Ellicott, stating: "I cannot leave this place without congratulating you upon the success of the Canal bill. It has become a law by large majorities in both houses and after much opposition."²² In this way Clinton acknowledged how effectively Ellicott had worked on the canal project.

Ellicott's efforts to build a canal paid dividends, for with the passage of the 1817 law, land sales in western New York increased, and Ellicott raised the price of all Company lands in the northern area by more than one dollar and fifty cents an acre.²³ The Company profits con-

Paul Busti, June 21, 1817, *ibid.*, p. 127; Joseph Ellicott to DeWitt Clinton, January 1817, *ibid.*, p. 114.

20. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, June 21, 1817, *ibid.*, p. 127.

21. Paul Busti to DeWitt Clinton, February 22, 1817, *ibid.*, p. 121.

22. DeWitt Clinton to Joseph Ellicott, April 16, 1817, in Vol. XIV, p. 124.

23. Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, June 21, 1817, *ibid.*, p. 128.

tinued to grow when the Commissioners ordered that digging be started at once and pushed the construction work vigorously. On July 4, 1817, the contractor turned the first shovelful of dirt at Rome, and by the end of that year, the labor gangs had dug some fifteen miles of the canal channel. The following year the progress exceeded Clinton's "most sanguine expectations." In 1819, a thousand men working in the marshes near Syracuse were felled by malarial fevers, but the canal progressed; and in October of that year the workers had completed ninety-six miles. In that year, too, the first boats navigated the completed section and Clinton found his dreams becoming a reality. Tammany Hall, jealous of Clinton's popularity, tried in 1819 to limit further construction westward to the Seneca River. The Legislature defeated this move. Opposition thereafter almost disappeared.

The Commissioners had given generously of their time to drive construction forward, but a "severe contusion" on Commissioner Ellicott's right leg in 1818 forced him to resign from the Board. Although his injury was a real one, resulting from an accident while sleighing, some of his previous complaints revealed an illness more psychosomatic than organic, for he suffered from melancholy and had all the symptoms of hypochondria. In addition to his poor health, Ellicott felt that his "indispensable duties" limited the time he could spend as Commissioner. As Resident-Agent, he was extremely busy meeting buyers, selling land, writing statements of land sales, recording receipts, keeping numerous accounts up to date and attending to the many duties associated with this job. His annual reports consumed much of his spare time. Further, Ellicott had his own handsome estate to supervise. Thus, it was that when Ellicott thought that his relative inactivity as a Commissioner added to the burdens of the other four

members of the board, he offered his resignation to Clinton.²⁴

Busti wanted Ellicott to continue, not only because Tamany was just then trying to halt the canal at the Seneca River, but because a decision on the location west of the Genesee, whether chiefly through Company lands, must be made. At first, the Commissioners supported the southern route. It would shorten the canal by several miles and would correspondingly reduce the cost of construction. Furthermore, the Holland Land Company had donated over one hundred thousand acres of land and the Commissioners felt obligated to please the Company. The southern route, however, had serious drawbacks. The summit rose to seventy-five feet above the surface of Lake Erie, preventing the use of the waters of that lake as a virtually inexhaustible feeder. Moreover, the canal engineers were not convinced that the immediate creeks near the southern route could furnish sufficient water to replace the expected canal leakages and to compensate for the losses from the use of many locks.

While the Commissioners debated which route to choose, James Geddes, a canal engineer, located a depression in the Niagara Escarpment, a break north of the Tonawanda Creek, through which the canal might proceed without too much cutting of the ridge. The Canal Commissioners, therefore, abandoned the southern route, and, in 1820, adopted the route north of the escarpment.²⁵

24. Joseph Ellicott to DeWitt Clinton, *Pioneer History of the Holland Purchase of Western New York*, p. 434; Joseph Ellicott to DeWitt Clinton, May 6, 1818, Ellicott Collection; Joseph Ellicott to Myron Holley, June 16, 1818, Vol. XIV, p. 64; Joseph Ellicott to DeWitt Clinton, June 29, 1818, DeWitt Clinton Papers, Columbia University.

25. Noble E. Whitford, *History of the Canal System of the State of New York* (Albany; Brandow Publishing Company, 1908), Vol. I, pp. 65, 79, 100.

Although the selection of the northern route deeply disappointed Ellicott, this setback did not end his influence or interest in the project. He understood how vitally the canal affected land sales and profit. Thus, when DeWitt Clinton asked him to recommend a suitable person "to examine Buffalo Creek and to report the plan of a safe and commodious harbor at that place for vessels navigating Lake Erie, together with an estimate of the probable expense," Ellicott quickly accepted the the Governor's request. He saw at a glance that this report would probably decide the location of the western terminus of the canal. If Buffalo Creek had "a safe and commodious harbor," what better place could the Board choose as the terminus — particularly since the lands washed by the creek were owned by the Holland Land Company? Ellicott therefore submitted the name of William Peacock, knowing that he would favor the Company interest. Clinton promptly appointed him.²⁶

This move intensified the long smoldering fight between Black Rock and Buffalo. The Porter brothers had seen as clearly as had Ellicott that Peacock's report could well decide the location of the canal terminus. Black Rock, they pointed out, already had a good harbor superior to that at Buffalo; and the canal would have to run two additional miles if the Commissioners extended it to Buffalo. Earlier, Peter Porter had vainly used his influence upon Governor Tompkins in the matter of the Oswego and Lake Ontario route. Clinton had tried to persuade Porter to favor the Lake Erie route. "I have tried to correct Porter's heresy but he is inflexible," he observed, "I presume that he will not be a dangerous opponent in a case so clear." But the Porters had decided to fight.²⁷

26. DeWitt Clinton to Joseph Ellicott, May 2, 1818, in Vol. XIV, p. 138; DeWitt Clinton to Joseph Ellicott, June 18, 1818, *ibid.*, p. 139.

27. DeWitt Clinton to Joseph Ellicott, February 3, 1816, Ellicott Collection.

Peacock's report in 1819 explored the possibilities of a harbor at Buffalo and concluded in favor of Buffalo over Black Rock. Before forwarding his report to Clinton, he submitted it to Ellicott for his employer's approval. In the report, Peacock recognized that in the summer "vast quantities of sand and gravel" clogged the entrance to the Buffalo harbor. To solve this problem, Peacock recommended "the construction of a Stone Pier." He implemented this recommendation with various plans, explaining how the forces of nature aided Buffalo, for when ice broke up in the spring the great discharge of water cut a clearance through the clogged gravel forming a channel some twelve feet deep. Furthermore, the lake current flowed one-half mile an hour, adding pressure to the spring flow. Peacock therefore concluded his report by advising that the Commissioners select Buffalo for the harbor and the western terminus of the canal. As he put it: "Buffalo from its local situation is apparently the key which opens to the People of the State of New York a most stupendous path of navigation and of commerce extending the distance of more than 2,000 miles."²⁸

Independent of Peacock's report and Ellicott's efforts, some of the more aggressive residents of Buffalo had petitioned the Legislature for a donation of money to build a harbor. Ellicott felt that "the ever restless Buffalonians" had behaved impatiently in not permitting the Legislature sufficient time to analyze Peacock's report concerning harbor facilities. He was afraid that the aggressiveness of this group might alienate the sympathetic attitude of the Legislature, remarking, "I hope the Legislature will treat the application with the contempt it so deservedly merits." Senator Evans, a nephew of El-

28. William Peacock to Joseph Ellicott, January 18, 1819, in Vol. XIV, pp. 148-155; William Peacock to Joseph Ellicott, January 26, 1819, Ellicott Collection.

licott, agreed with his uncle's position but remained calm, for he thought that the bill had slight chance of passage.²⁹

Contrary to their expectations, on April 7, 1819, the Legislature acceded to the demands of the Buffalonians and passed an act for the construction of a harbor at Buffalo. The Legislature, however, instead of making an outright grant, instructed the Comptroller to lend twelve thousand dollars to all or any of these Buffalonians; the debtors were to repay the loan in ten years. In the event that the Commissioners chose Black Rock as the canal terminus, the law allowed the corporation to charge a fee for every vessel that used the newly constructed Buffalo harbor. Ellicott strongly opposed this aspect of the act.³⁰

It was Ellicott's opposition to the petition for a Buffalo harbor that brought him into conflict with the more influential Buffalo residents and obscured his real contributions to the Canal. Their resentment changed to bitterness when, in 1820, it appeared that the Canal Commissioners had decided on Black Rock as the terminus. Angrily, Oliver Forward, Samuel Wilkeson, George Coit, and Charles Townsend, all from Buffalo, turned to Busti for financial aid, explaining to him their grievances against Ellicott. They charged Ellicott with misrepresentation, claiming that he had obtained high prices for lots in Buffalo on his promise that a harbor would soon be built. They blamed him for the reported loss of the canal terminus to Black Rock, and asserted that, by offering in 1818 a paltry \$3,500 toward Buffalo harbor construction, he had forced the Buffalonians to petition the Legislature

for an outright grant of money. When the Legislature offered them a loan, instead of a grant, they had been forced to saddle themselves with debt to obtain sufficient funds to build the harbor.³¹

Despite the gloomy outlook, the Buffalonians still hoped that the Commissioners would choose Buffalo as the canal terminus. If Buffalo were selected, they felt that the Commissioners would then "authorize the loan to be converted into part of the Canal fund." In an effort to impress the Commission, they therefore proposed to make the Buffalo site more attractive by building a pier similar to the one that Peacock had recommended in the 1819 report. From the Holland Land Company they sought an appropriation for the building of this pier. If the appropriation did not materialize, and if the Legislature refused to cancel their debts, they wanted the Holland Company to share "an equitable proportion of the loss."

Busti refused to loan the money for the pier construction and denied the request to share the possible losses if the Legislature refused to cancel Buffalo's debts. Busti explained that he always followed the rule of aiding public works programs, provided that the Legislature, and not a private company such as theirs, undertook such a venture. Had the government undertaken the project, Busti would have risked the capital. As the situation was, he did not have sufficient confidence that a private company would succeed.³²

Despite Busti's refusal and Ellicott's inaction, the Buffalonians built a harbor which, in turn, influenced the Commission to choose Buffalo as the terminus. Construction of the harbor started in May 1821, and the following year Buffalo ex-

29. David Evans to Joseph Ellicott, February 13, 1819, Ellicott Collection; Joseph Ellicott to William Peacock, February 15, 1819, *ibid.*, David Evans to Joseph Ellicott, February 13, 1819, *ibid.*

30. *Buffalo Journal*, May 4, 1819; Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, November 2, 1819, Ellicott Collection.

31. Oliver Forward, Samuel Wilkeson, George Coit, Charles Townsend to Paul Busti, April 30, 1820, C. W. Evans Papers, Buffalo Historical Society.

32. Paul Busti to Oliver Forward and Connors, May 11, 1820, in Vol. XIV, pp. 164-166.

tended the pier. Progress on the harbor weakened Black Rock's claim, and in 1822 the Commissioners decided in favor of Buffalo. This decision Black Rock refused to accept and continued desperately to try to reverse the Commission's verdict. The bitter wrangling between the two villages continued. The newspapers of each village assaulted those of the other with vigor and venom; the *Niagara Journal* and the *Niagara Patriot* favored Buffalo, while the *Black Rock Beacon* supported Black Rock. Like their newspapers, the citizens of both villages persisted to the very end in the

fierce battle. Peter Porter commanded the Black Rock forces and Samuel Wilkeson led the Buffalo group. The Commission, however, stuck firmly to its decision of 1822 that the canal would end at Buffalo and on August 9, 1823, six of the older Buffalo residents dug the first shovelful of earth that made Buffalo the canal terminus.³³

33. *Buffalo and Black Rock Harbor Papers*, ed. by Frank H. Severance, Vol. XIV, p. 311-320.

Books You May Want to See

Millard Fillmore: Biography of a President. By Robert J. Rayback. Buffalo, Henry Stewart, Inc., for The Buffalo Historical Society, 1959. Pp. xvi, 470. \$7.50.

Dr. Robert J. Rayback of the Department of History, Syracuse University, has written what will almost certainly be the definitive story of the public career of Millard Fillmore, lawyer, politician, legislator, state Comptroller, Vice President and thirteenth President of the United States, and for many years "first citizen of Buffalo." It is the story of a career rather than of a life or a personality, chiefly because Fillmore or his heirs left a minimum of the requisite raw material for an intimate biography. If Fillmore kept a diary, no trace of it has been found. He wrote many personal letters, as we know from the many extant replies, but if he kept copies, they have vanished, and few of the originals have come to light. His only son is known to have ordered the destruction of his father's papers. The papers that escaped the fate so decreed (and are now housed in the Buffalo Historical Society) consist almost exclusively of letters received by Fillmore during the years of

his Vice Presidency and Presidency, 1849-1853. His own letters are not there. Consequently, it has been necessary for Dr. Rayback, as it would be for any other biographer, to infer Fillmore's thoughts and motives from the letters of his correspondence, from his official papers, and from his actions. The man behind the public mask is but partially revealed. The author speaks now and then of Fillmore's "agony" or "despair" (usually over his own political prospects or those of his party), but he infers Fillmore's emotions from the situation rather than from any verbal expression of them.

Within the limitations thus imposed by the available materials, Dr. Rayback has produced a good political biography. After a brief account of Fillmore's impecunious boyhood, his training for the law (by "reading" in a lawyer's office — the process by which he himself was to train many young lawyers later on), and his early practice, first in East Aurora, then in Buffalo, the author follows him into the political current. This he entered as an Antimason in 1828 and left after the fiasco of his presidential candidacy on the American (or Know-Nothing) ticket in 1856. Between those dates he had been

one of the architects of the Whig party and had served in Congress, as Comptroller of New York and as Vice President and President of the United States. As chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the National House of Representatives, he took the lead in writing the tariff of 1842, the kind of protective tariff that he believed in. As Comptroller of New York, he instituted important reforms in the State's banking and currency system, which had easily succumbed to the panic of 1837. These were important achievements that are seldom recalled. Both of them exhibit Fillmore's close link with the business world of his day.

Fillmore's friends backed him unsuccessfully for the Whig vice-presidential nomination in 1844, a year of Democratic triumph. That the nomination fell to him four years later was apparently the result not of any planning on his part but of a dramatic and well timed speech by one of his henchmen in the Whig Convention at Philadelphia. The nomination of southern slaveholder General Zachary Taylor for President had distressed antislavery Whigs and the Henry Clay faction. On the spur of the moment one John A. Collier of New York proposed Fillmore for second place on the ticket as a gesture of conciliation to the disaffected, and the Convention so resolved.

The victory of Taylor and Fillmore in the national election of 1848 ushered in a battle royal for control of the New York patronage between Fillmore and his rivals, Thurlow Weed and William H. Seward — a battle of wits in which the Vice President was badly worsted. But President Taylor's death, July 9, 1850, turned the tables, giving Fillmore a triumph which he used with characteristic moderation and magnanimity. Far more important than its consequences for New York State politics was the effect of the change upon the prospects of sectional compromise in Washington. There the best efforts of Clay, Daniel Webster, and Stephen A.

Douglas to put through a compromise program on current slavery issues were encountering firm resistance from Taylor, who had turned against his fellow-slaveholders. Fillmore, on the other hand, threw all his influence on the side of compromise, and within a few weeks of his accession the measures comprising the famous Compromise of 1850 were on the statute books over his signature. A sectional crisis which had brought the South to the brink of secession was postponed till 1861, when the North was relatively far stronger than in 1850.

It was devotion to the Union, not any friendliness to slavery, that led Fillmore to sponsor the Compromise. It was the same desire to soft-pedal sectional issues that persuaded him, like many other Whigs, to join the nativist, anti-foreign, anti-Catholic American party, and to accept its presidential nomination in 1856. This election, in which he ran a poor third to Democrat Buchanan and Republican Fremont, was his last venture in politics. Thereafter he retired to private life and, unlike Buffalo's other ex-President, Grover Cleveland, he returned to live out his life in his native town. Resumption of his law practice, which he considered undignified in an ex-President, was made unnecessary by his marriage to a well-to-do widow (the first Mrs. Fillmore having died in 1853). Often referred to as "Buffalo's first citizen," he gave time and thought to a great variety of civic enterprises. A temporary cloud, resulting from his criticism of the conduct of the Civil War and his support of General McClellan as presidential candidate in 1864, was dissipated with the end of the war, and he lived an active and respected life until the end in 1874.

The author has committed, or allowed the printer to commit, a few minor errors, such as printing Frémont without the accent and Hülseman without the umlaut, misusing the word "cohort" (page 262), running Henry Clay for the Presidency in 1828 and burying him in Frankfort in-

stead of Lexington, Kentucky, but for the most part the story is accurately told. Before undertaking the Fillmore biography Dr. Rayback had contemplated the writing of a history of the Whig party. His interest in that subject is evident, and the reader will find the book rich in information about the New York activities of that party and its queer forerunner and queer legatee, the Antimasonic and Know-Nothing parties. Dr. Rayback deserves our thanks for giving us at long last a competent biography of a neglected public man, and the Buffalo Historical Society may take pride in having sponsored its publication in attractive format.

JULIUS W. PRATT

Chautauqua County, A History. By Helen G. McMahon. Henry Stewart, Incorporated, Buffalo, N. Y., 1958. Pp. 339, illustrations. \$5.95.

Since the great splurge in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the State of New York has not lacked for histories of its sixty-two counties. The reviewer has amassed a long file drawer of the holdings of such histories in the libraries of the City of Buffalo alone. What has been lacking is a collection of such county histories that are well-written and that place the particular county in the mainstream of state and national development. We have one of these in John T. Horton's history of Erie County, but they are rare indeed.

Though not as complete as Professor Horton's work, nor as successful in placing Chautauqua County in the mainstream of the state's history, Miss McMahon has written a fine book. The style is lucid and interesting. The author knows her subject and brings that invaluable ingredient, love of her land, to the task. Her purpose in writing the book, "to combine information with entertainment," has been admirably achieved.

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Though arranged in proper chronological format, the organization of the work is primarily topical. Thus we have chapters on the Chautauqua Portage, the Pioneer Doctor, Lumbering, Early Village Days, Fisheries, Religious Movements, and the like. In some cases the chapters have been drawn completely from the works of Andrew Young and Obed Edson. This does not detract from the work, but makes for some short chapters and a kind of choppiness in the middle of the book.

Included is considerable useful detail often overlooked in even the best of professional history writing. The number of acres that could be cleared in a year by the pioneer farmer, the identification of the variety of wood used when mentioning the "cherry or pine cross-legged table", the color of the most popular calico dress as being "figures of blue", "eggs were beaten with a fork, not an egg-beater" and dozens of similar illustrations give the work a body that greatly increases its value. There is a most excellent chapter on the asheries that explains the black salts and saleratus products of the pioneer community in a better fashion than the reviewer has read anywhere else.

There are some shortcomings, of course. The work is rather uneven, giving considerable space to some rather inconsequential things and little to some more meaningful things. The author is weakest when she tries to generalize about events of national importance. It is surely too simple to refer to the War of 1812 as the war "to vindicate the right of the United States to accept as Citizens the subjects of other lands . . . and to carry on trade during war" As this book will be read by the school children of the county, such a misconception is unfortunate. Again the reviewer doubts the influence of Lafayette in getting aid from the French government; Benedict Arnold at Saratoga was infinitely more effective.

The book is nevertheless a very useful addition to our county histories and will

be much more widely read than most. To Miss McMahon, this reviewer sends a hearty "well done."

ERIC BRUNGER

*State University College
of Education at Buffalo*

The Wadsworths of the Genesee. By Alden Hatch. New York, Coward-McCann, 1959. Pp. 315, illustrations. \$5.00.

Alden Hatch's skill as a writer of popular biography, chiefly of twentieth century contemporaries, is well known. In the *Wadsworths of the Genesee* he essays no small task — nothing less than a biography (occupying half of the volume's 315 pages) of Senator James W. Wadsworth, Jr. (1877-1952), and a composite biography of other distinguished members of the Wadsworth family, from General Jeremiah Wadsworth of Revolutionary War fame, through his nephews James and Bill Wadsworth (of War of 1812 reknown), General James Samuel Wadsworth (Civil War hero), James W. Wadsworth, Sr. (father of the Senator and himself a distinguished member of the House of Representatives, known to his family as the "Boss"), through to the Senator's son, James Jeremiah Wadsworth, now United States Deputy Representative to the United Nations. He thus covers five generations of the Wadsworth family, a period of 165 years. He makes brief excursions, in the course of his book, into the fields of social, agricultural, and military history, and treats political developments more fully. Given the magnitude of his subject, it is not surprising that even on the popular level his work will leave the reader who is interested in any particular aspect of it wishing for a more detailed discussion.

The historian will be especially interested in the sources Hatch has used. It is probably idle to protest, with regard to a trade book intended for the general read-

er, the lack of conventional scholarly apparatus. There is no documentation of any kind, no footnotes, no bibliography. But in his prefatory remarks he refers with feeling to the files of Hartford House, which he has used; and throughout the book he makes effective use of direct quotations and paraphrases from travel narratives, letters, and the "memoirs" of the Senator, which apparently constitute an unpublished autobiography, or perhaps a Morgenthau diary sort of thing. Many of the allusions in the text are no more than tantalizing, since one immediately wants to know more about the documents, their date and physical characteristics. Some of this information might have been included in the narrative. As a matter of fact, the publisher may have underestimated the popular appeal of the savor of these documents; and a few facsimiles would have constituted an effective addition to the illustrations in the book, which consist mainly of portraits and photographs. One wonders, too, what the nature of the files of Hampton House, which was destroyed by fire in 1932 and which had been the Senator's residence, may have been. This reviewer has been informed that some documents were probably lost in that fire. There is no indication that Hatch has engaged in multi-archival research, using collections of family papers in other custody.

One of the themes Hatch develops is social history; his discussion of the origins and activities of the Genesee Hunt, for example, is highly colorful, his style appropriate to the subject. It is to be hoped that he has allowed freer reign to his imagination here than on other subjects, since there is a disconcerting number of errors in his account of Cary family participation in these events. Almost everything is wrong in his account (p. 116) of the celebrated polo match outside Boston (not Buffalo) where Mrs. Walter Cary (not Mrs. Trumbull Cary) summoned her son Seward to rally to the

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relief. And Dr. Walter Cary had six sons and one daughter, not the "three sons and assorted daughters" attributed to him.

Hatch has produced an eminently readable and interesting book. Readers who followed the serialization of it in the *Buffalo Evening News* will be well aware of his powers to sustain a narrative, his eye for the colorful anecdote and the picturesque detail. The history of the Wadsworth family is one of real significance for anyone who wishes to arrive at an understanding of the history of our region, state, and nation, no one of which can be truly grasped apart from the other.

LESTER W. SMITH

Niagara County and Its Towns. By L. L. PECHUMAN. Lockport, Niagara County Historical Society, 1958. \$1.00.

Something new has been added to the already successful *Occasional Contributions of the Niagara County Historical Society*—color; Dr. L. L. Pechuman, as author, is to be congratulated on his latest historical effort, *Niagara County and Its Towns*.

Series of simple line maps of New York State, with colored areas and boundaries are presented in chronological order to indicate the "ancestors" of Niagara County and its twelve townships. Each map is accompanied by an all-too-short explanation of the how, when, where, and occasional why of the colored area of the map.

Map 1, entitled *Tryon County, 1772*, shows the boundary of the earliest legally created subdivision containing western New York. This is followed by a series of other maps indicating the rapid changes that resulted from the Revolutionary War and opening of the Six Nations territory to settlement. Map 7 shows the creation of Genesee County in 1802-03, along with its four townships, one of which encompassed the Holland Land Purchase.

Starting with Map 8, there are maps of three and four colors dealing with the de-

velopment of townships in Niagara County, when that county included the present Erie County. Map 14, entitled *Niagara County 1821*, indicates the division of Niagara County into two counties, the other being Erie. At that time Niagara County had seven townships, while Erie County was divided into two, Clarence and Willink.

Excerpts from the Laws of the State of New York accompany maps 15 through 18 to indicate the boundaries of the added townships of Niagara County.

If other counties of New York State had "Genealogies" or "Family Trees" such as Niagara and Erie Counties have, research in local history would become much easier than it is today.

JULIA BOYER-REINSTEIN

The Issue's Authors

LEVINUS K. PAINTER skirts the question of his profession by stating that he is now a retired person living on his farm on Bagdad Road, Collins, but he has been a church leader and organizer among the Quakers—it is better to say that he helps his brethren among the Friends' Meetings. Of his interest in Indian matters he has this to say: "I serve on the Associated Executive Committee on Indian Affairs (Quaker) and make frequent trips to Oklahoma Indian centers. Also for a number of years I served on the Indian Committee of the Home Mission Division, National Council of Churches. Interest in Indians is a family tradition. My great-grandparents, Dean and Esther King, were the first Superintendent and Matron at White's Institute in Indiana, an institution originally set up for Indian children. For a few years I taught Bible in the Thomas Indian School." Many readers will recall Mr. Painter's articles on his recent journey to Africa. These were published in the *Buffalo Evening News*.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 98TH ANNUAL MEETING

Address of the President

by Julian Park

WELCOME to the 98th annual meeting of the Buffalo Historical Society! We can this year give you a more convenient access to the building. The word convenient is used advisedly; I cannot bring myself to say a more beautiful access. Some trees are gone, some of the lovely little lake is gone, some green spaces eliminated. Yet we are grateful for the additional parking space, grateful too for the unexpected speed with which the whole operation, now almost finished, was accomplished. It is, however, a strange commentary on the so-called march of progress that it seems in so many cases incompatible with the preservation of a beautiful natural environment. We may at least express satisfaction in the situation when we realize that our attendance, which has suffered during the last year, will now surely reach its high figures of the past.

This is our 98th birthday, and we are already beginning to think about the most appropriate way to celebrate the hundredth. It is a bit odd, but a most pleasant coincidence, that the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, and the Buffalo Historical Society were all founded within a few months of each other, and, most curiously, in the stress and strain of some of the worst of the Civil War months. One would think that preoccupation with the very preservation of the Union would have prevented, or postponed, consideration of cultural needs. But happily our surplus energies had to have release in other than sanguinary thoughts.

Committees to prepare for this celebration are about to set to work. It may be that a joint affair can be planned; an orgy of culture, as it were.

Those of you who are long-time members will recall that perhaps the principal way in which our Society became a prominent part of the scholarly world was by the publication, for a time almost annually, of books which few public or university libraries could do without. Many of them were used as source material for doctoral dissertations, and it is interesting to note that this year two such theses are under way in Buffalo, the authors using for the most part the resources of our library. After a gap of years, necessitated primarily by the rising costs of printing, but also by our own high standards of publication, the Society, as most of you know, a few months ago published the only really authoritative life of its first president, Millard Fillmore. Dr. Rayback, of Syracuse University, had been at work on this book for several years and many times came to Buffalo for help. He has not succeeded, because he didn't try, in making Fillmore an exciting or picturesque figure; Fillmore was, of course, no Andrew Jackson or Theodore Roosevelt. Nor has Dr. Rayback fallen so completely in love with his subject (which might have been difficult) as to exaggerate his importance in history. But surely any man who has filled the office of President of the United States by that fact deserves a full treatment, especially when his tenure coincided with several events with which he had much to do and which it is no exaggeration to call epoch-making. It is an example, too, not often met with, but typically American, of how a rather obscure politician can overnight be called upon to meet a challenge for which he was in no way prepared, and meet that challenge with surprising credit to himself and to his country. Here Buffalo for the first

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but not the last time contributes permanently to our national history. Incidentally, another Buffalonian who has done just that is with us tonight. Some of you (but not too many) have bought this book, thanks to its own merits and to the

indefatigable energy of its publisher, our fellow-member Mr. Stewart, whose loving care has resulted in a beautiful piece of book-making. It deserves your practical interest.

Presentation of the Red Jacket Medal to John Lord O'Brian

THE FORM which our attempt annually takes to honor a fellow-citizen who has made our community a better place to live in, may strike you as a bit curious. It is certainly unconventional; no other organization can show its like.

I have here a replica of the medal presented to Sa-go-ye-wat-ha (better known to all of us as Red Jacket, although the implication of the Indian name to all public speakers might not apply, since it means He-keeps-em-awake). It was presented to him by President Washington in 1792. It stands for an event of far more than local interest, and hence vividly attests to the connection, not always apparent, between local and national history. It recalls the first organized attempt of the United States government to improve the condition of the Indians, many of whom were still muttering their distrust of their white neighbors, and, as you know, even in 1813 Indian allies crossed with the British troops and helped in the destruction of Buffalo. A formal invitation was given to the Six Nations to appoint a delegation which should confer in the nation's capital with the white man's great chief. And so forty-seven of them gathered in Philadelphia to receive courtesies and have their ego extended. White chief and Indian chief smoked the pipe of peace (that too is in our museum) and the President gave Red Jacket a silver medal symbolical of the importance of the occasion, for the two are depicted smoking that pipe. It is because of its historical importance that this medal has been chosen as the His-

torical Society's emblem of gratitude to the benefactors of the community. Annually a replica of this quaint medal is awarded to a person who the Society considers has been distinguished for some civic achievement or service. It need not fall into any one category, nor need it recognize one single unrelated achievement, important as that may be; it may emphasize, as in this case, a lifetime of continued, unbroken devotion to our progress and welfare. No other person has influenced the life of this community in so many different directions as has our guest tonight. The record is so long and variegated that it seems necessary, as well as appropriate, to place the emphasis on community service; he is here as a fellow-citizen.

We are here to welcome back to Buffalo one who has never left it except physically. Spiritually he has remained one of us. He was born, brought up, and educated here — except for four years at Cambridge, which I am embarrassed to say don't count in our story. Instead of tonight bringing in Fair Harvard, our theme is how to make Buffalo fairer. If it hadn't been for the war he might still be in Buffalo — another evidence of the evil that war can do. He rose from the office of United States Attorney for the Western District of New York to become one of the greatest of government lawyers of his day. During the Roosevelt administration he took a conspicuous part in some of the most important legislation in which the government was involved. To his learning the government owed much of its success in

the litigation testing the constitutionality of the TVA; and later as general counsel of the War Production Board he solved problems of vital concern to the conduct of the war.

It is not, however, for us tonight to evaluate such services. We are here, most of us, as his friends who want to think back over the many years and to realize what the city of our birth or of our adoption owes to his imaginative leadership in so many directions, and, more personally, what we ourselves as individuals owe to the warmth of his friendship.

What does education in this State owe to him? He was a member of the Council of the University of Buffalo for many years — and those years the formative ones — before and after the founding of the Arts College — when expert guidance was sorely needed. To him as chairman of the committee on the selection of a Chancellor we owe the coming of Samuel P. Capen. As attorney for the University his was the advice on financial, statutory and many other matters, advice which set the institution on orderly and consistent ways. He resigned from the University Council to become Regent of the University of the State of New York. What his thoughts were and are concerning the new State University of New York one can only guess.

What does his Church owe to him? For many years he was Chancellor of the Diocese of Western New York, in other words legal adviser to the Bishop not only on financial affairs but on much more personal and perhaps even more difficult problems. Few who are not Harvard graduates (and not all who are) know that there is a John Lord O'Brian professorship of divinity at the Harvard Divinity School. He was chairman of the committee which raised several millions and gave a new lease of life to that venerable institution.

What does the legal profession owe to him? Primarily a concept of law which relates it closely to ethics and the larger

non-technical interests of society, a concept which inspired hundreds of students during his long professorship at the Buffalo Law School.

What does politics in the largest sense owe to him? As a candidate many, many years ago for Mayor, and more recently for United States Senator, he raised the level of public debate to a new plane of high thinking and plain speaking; not only as candidate but as impartial student he ever gave to the republic of politics his rare talent for organization, his incisive judgment of issues, his extraordinary power of public interpretation, and his creative imagination. Decisions are the bones of leadership; words are its flesh. He is a master of both. His words, whether written or spoken, are used with an assured but not labored artistry; they had, and still exercise, a strong formative influence on the climate of public opinion. It is the utterance of an idealism, not blind or ignorant or sentimental, but invincible.

In the annals of our city it would be difficult to parallel the extent and long continuance of his liberating and stimulating influence upon the more thoughtful men and women of his country. Few men enjoy so happy an old age, filled with congenial and characteristic occupation, domestic serenity, devoted friends, and expanding interest in the past and future of human society.

The Buffalo Historical Society, acting as the agent and interpreter of all who love our city and believe in its destiny, gladly and gratefully awards its Red Jacket Medal to John Lord O'Brian.



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Response by Mr. O'Brian

WHEN YOUR President invited me to come here tonight, he asked me to answer the question of a speech by me, and I cannot do otherwise than just briefly express my appreciation of this very great honor. I only wish that I could convey to you my very deep feeling of emotion on this occasion because this man that he was talking about never really existed. There was a man who profited by the devotion of his friends to an abnormal degree, which is also evidenced by your presence here this evening, but the man whom he was talking about isn't here at all. Nevertheless I welcome his very gracious compliments, the more (I realize as many of you do) that those gracious remarks contain many, many exaggerations.

It was my good fortune throughout my life thus far in Buffalo to associate myself from time to time with groups of people who knew more than I did, and who were all characterized by a love of this city and by confidence in its destiny. They were the inheritors of an old tradition that went back to the village days, the greatest of all traditions, the tradition of service. I first met this in my early connection with the Charity Organization, which I began as soon as I left college. What a proud heritage this city has had! Historians, if they read the master roll of the men and women who made this city, will find many men conspicuous in public affairs who rendered notable service, but still were not the persons who gave this city its distinctive tone, its tradition of philanthropy. That record was made by a great many forgotten people, the people who were bound together by a common aspiration to make this city a better city, and I am especially happy to have my name associated from now on with the records of the Buffalo Historical Society.

We sometimes fail to recall how distinctive this Society is. As it stands today it is the creation of countless patient, quiet

people who were endowed, as I have said, with this sense of devotion to the tradition of their city. It is the one repository of the records of the multitudes who lived here and who have contributed to the fame of this city and to its distinctive place in history. We are told that we are on the verge of great changes in the world, the physical world, the intellectual world. That may well be, but the characteristics of the people who made this Society, and who realized the importance of preserving the records of the past, will still remain a dominant necessity whatever changes may come upon us. The sense of public honor, the aspiration for honest government, the overwhelming power of the tradition of generosity and philanthropy that has characterized so many in this city, will be more important than ever in the days that lie ahead of us.

But the work of the Buffalo Historical Society, 98 years old, just think of it, is the work of a relatively small group of people, who, generation after generation, have remained faithful to this tradition of service, and have had the wisdom to treat reverently the records of the past, the records that embody the real spirit of Buffalo. This organization is making a contribution made by no other institution in this community. It has kept alive in these records the essential memory of the idealism, the unselfish idealism of these silent people who have year after year stood out for the more excellent things in the community history, who are still working in their quiet way for decency and honesty, the essence of patriotism in my opinion. And so tonight I am most deeply grateful that my name will be associated with the records of this Society. You have given me a deep and lasting sense of gratitude, and I am sure you have given the members of my family cause for happy memories. Again I thank all of you with all the earnestness I possess.

The Annual Report of the Director

THIS IS, in my mind, the year of public recognition for the Buffalo Historical Society. Since we have not been totally ignored previously, this means not something new but still a distinctively greater series of contacts with what we conceive to be our public, enough greater to cause us to look about with a pleased and dazed air. What have we done to deserve this? we ask, and on second thought we decide to forego natural curiosity and merely detail the fact so that you can share the pleasure of the moment with us. In the past year we have had two balls given in our benefit, our friends descended on us to have dinner before the annual meeting, the Junior League adopted us for the purpose of developing a major exhibit idea, the Civil War buffs joined us in forming a Civil War Round Table that is working intimately with us, and two Foundations made grants to support our work. In addition I think we on the staff sense a greater general interest in local history and a sharp advance in the feeling that much can readily be done to make it serve our civic aspirations; the newspapers could hardly treat us more generously, but perhaps they, too, have done more, and inquiries about matters of historical interest keep our phones jangling and pile up questions and suggestions beyond our capacity to deal with them as generously as they deserve. It has added up in our consciousness to a feeling that we belong, that we mean something to Buffalo, and that Buffalo expects something of us.

We have become aware also of something that has been creeping up on us: we have a lending service in museum objects. During 1959 so far we have made 31 distinct loans aggregating 190 articles. No one makes much of a fuss about handling 190 books in a library but when we have items running from chemises to cannon balls the problem is more complex.

A considerable quantity of time and energy is absorbed in this enterprise, enough to make us consider whether it is desirable to develop this service further. But look at the borrowers: Hodge Florists, and Sattlers, and Buffalo Savings Bank for exhibits seen by multitudes, schools for classroom use, television performers (Dr. Virginia Cummings is still carrying on a weekly program for children, started at our request), four historical societies, a few individuals for a variety of purposes, and the recruiting service of the United States Marine Corps.

On the whole we hope that such demands will continue, but we must also take them into account when we calculate the resources we shall need to continue our operations. This has become an important item in the absorption of staff time.

We had thought that the completion of our extended effort in cataloging would bring some relief in the matter of handling our museum collections. You see how such matters turn out: ready access to these riches has created a new job. It may become necessary to consider whether we can continue to act as a lender. We do not lend our research materials, but this is a different problem since our museum collection is the only source of the service, while the Public Library can furnish most of the books people might reasonably expect to borrow.

We count it a good year in our educational services, for our school-class visitors increased from 18,000 to 22,000, or twenty-two percent. The tendency is necessarily upward, and there are unaccountable fluctuations in the stream of these visitors, but we believe that our care to provide willing services to these welcome visitors is a factor in swelling the figure. We are constantly reminded of the importance of County support to us in the fact that these

services are largely paid from those funds.

It is better not to absorb your attention in the tack-pounding side of the Director's activities. But please believe that the staff is keen to maintain our building at its spectacular best. During the year we have found the means to put our superb Lincoln statue on a permanent base of Georgia marble, and to replace floor surfaces in one museum room and in the Board room. The maintenance staff is in the midst of the task of applying fireproofing paint to the walls of the workroom and we have begun operations to establish a small kitchen facility. Roof and porticoes are receiving waterproofing. We regret to note that the grounds are still not as neat and handsome as the beauty of our building plainly demands, although the trees on the lake side have been trimmed, and the current administration's vigorous attack on the Delaware Park cleanup plans gives us hope. Our corner should be put in order, and we are asking further that one or more of the new lots now lying between us and the relocated Elmwood Avenue should be added to the Park so that our location and the Park entrance can be seen plainly.

This week should see another notable improvement well started: the clearing of the old Elmwood Avenue pavement so that parking space may be efficiently laid out for our visitors, plans for which are being prepared by Mr. William Tunkey. The physical alterations are being made at the suggestion of the Board by the New York State Department of Public Works.

It has to be noted, however, that we are shortly going to have a major job done in the pointing of the building's masonry. This does not overshadow in the list of needs the growing need for improved and enlarged facilities for our basic operations. For several years we have struggled to enlarge our storage facilities (both museum and research) and we are still finding more space. But we cannot continue for more than a few more years without

considering major remodeling. We have had an architectural survey for a concealed library wing, done by Mr. Rufus Meadows, and we are studying as well the possibility of using new types of stacks to make better use of existing space. Small museum items can be collected at a reasonable rate for some years yet, but storage for bulky items must soon be found. We cannot continue as a museum without making collections, and even microfilming cannot forever avert the necessity of adding space for books and manuscript records. Even now we are presuming on the charity of Mr. Laub of George Laub's Sons and Mr. Levick of the Seneca Warehouse to hold a considerable quantity of material for us.

This Society, as others of its kind, is dependent on volunteer help. In this situation it is quite natural for a staff to become accustomed to volunteers to the extent of taking them quite for granted. We don't propose to do this here, but to make constant effort to make volunteer work as fruitful and satisfying as it can be, and to do this we must include proper recognition for what is being done, no matter how little to the taste of our volunteers personal publicity may be.

It is as a matter of fact not very practical to list all those who are helping us on every such occasion, and it is fortunately true that certain operations and their activating personnel are by now fairly well known. I note the Erie County Historical Federation among these. The Federation is not strictly our own, but a companionable organization of local societies quite essential to all, at least as we understand our purposes. To its officers, George Sipprell, John Printy, Julia Boyer-Reinstein, John S. N. Sprague, and Oneta Baker, and to its many active members, we accord thanks. Within our own organization the Lower Lakes Marine Chapter and the Civil War Round Table are performing really essential tasks. The Congress of Historical Societies discharges our

responsibility for professional leadership over a wide area, and we owe the idea to John Horton and its administration to him, Arthur Kaiser, and others of the University of Buffalo. Here, too, the Federation has provided advice and support.

Under this head, too, must be listed professional organizations whose members are available for aid and counsel. This week the Northeast Museums Conference meets here (and may I note the willing assistance of Mrs. Charles Cary and Frank Diem in arranging the meeting). This organization is a branch of the American Association of Museums and I am proud to say that its officers unsolicited selected this Society as its headquarters for this convention. Some of our members have indicated interest in the meetings, and I am certain that we will gain by their attendance. Another group that serves us well is the American Association for State and Local History, which launched *American Heritage* and out of its profits are earnestly attempting to assist local societies to do their work at top efficiency. Last week as a member of the Council of the Association I persuaded them to hold their 1961 meeting here—subject to requirements as to local hospitality that I believe can be met.

But it is our day-by-day volunteer helpers who most concern us in spite of the glamour of such great organizations. Without Norbert Metz it would be difficult to collect materials in agricultural history for the Fair; Roy Nagle makes a very great difference indeed to public awareness of local history and its human importance; Willard Andrews has taken over our clock collection and will yet make us nationally known in this fascinating field; work goes on in our doll collection as well as in stamps and coins; and without the names of Illingworth, Swift, McCausland, Lankes, and other amateurs our quarterly magazine would be far less interesting.

The Museum, as a result of the sympa-

thetic leadership of Ken Hopkins and Ann Kellerman, has done exceptionally well in making use of the selfless enthusiasm of volunteers who come here only to help us, not being motivated by amateur interests or hobbyist curiosity. Mrs. John Putnam, Jr., has taken over the work of co-ordinating these, recruiting them from the Junior League and the Girl Scouts as well as from our citizens at large. A number of essential projects, notably cataloging, that inspired drudgery, depends upon them.

In the manuscript field, we received during the year the gift of an important group of Cary Family Papers, presented by Charles Cary. A preliminary inventory of these papers has been prepared, which serves as a finding aid to them; and a selection of the architectural records of George Cary will be added to them. The valuable groups of Sawyer Family Papers, presented by Mrs. Ansley Sawyer, and of the Norman Mack Papers, presented by Norman Mack II, both received last year, have also been inventoried and arranged for research. We acknowledge with deep gratitude the generous gift, by a donor who prefers to remain anonymous, of \$500 for special work to be done on the Wilkeson Family Papers in our custody.

Also received during the year were several speeches of the late Edward H. Letchworth, and memorials to him, presented by Mrs. Edward H. Letchworth; and several items relating to William H. Crosby, presented by his daughter, Mrs. Helen Hekimian.

Actively being planned are statements for public distribution describing our policies in the collecting of research materials. This year has been no different from every other in rudely reminding us of the treasures constantly being lost by careless acts of destruction: we have, again, been told more than once by people carefully handing us undated and unidentified newspaper clippings on miscellaneous matters that they have saved us trouble by destroying the letters of important families. Trouble

they saved us, certainly, but not pain. We hope that one day all will understand that history depends upon the preservation of such things.

In honor of the centennial of Grover Cleveland's admission to the Bar of Erie County, the Society displayed for two months a special exhibit of Grover Cleveland documents, drawing from its own holdings and from the collections of Roy Nagle, which he very generously loaned for the occasion.

The Society is known, or more significantly, makes the history of Buffalo and Erie County known, to a much broader public than Buffalo and Erie County through its publications and through its reference services by mail. Many of these out-of-town requests are for photoduplication service (photostats and microfilm copies of our research holdings). The invention of these photoduplication devices has, in a very real sense, given all historical societies a nation-wide clientele. These are time-consuming services to provide. But they are essential services, for they mean that the contributions of Buffalonians and Erie Countyians will be given due recognition in broader studies of our State and National history. So, in the past year, requests for copies of our holdings have come from such diverse places as the University of Missouri, New York University, Harvard University, the Catholic University of America, Stetson University, Columbia University, and the University of California, from professors and students working on such diverse subjects as the War of 1812, Peter B. Porter, Millard Fillmore and Henry Washington Hilliard, the history of the movement for international copyright, cholera epidemics in the United States, the history of the United States Custom Service. These are but a sample of the year's requests for information services on our research holdings.

Once again, why do we do all of this? Have we a legitimate interest in our past,

beyond the admirable sentiment for our home place that moves us all? Why do we look critically at our past — at ourselves?

Please begin by noting that we are not the only ones who try to explain what we are. If we neglect the matter it will be cared for adequately enough by others — except that the truth is likely to be ignored. Let me remind you how shockingly we are misinterpreted in the popular arts. Opening up a new popular novel on American life recently I had a moment's real pleasure to find my name in the foreword as a contributor to the author's knowledge of his subject. Naturally I read on to find the evidences of my contribution and discovered that the author had indeed recited much fact about our past; he had names and places right, dates and events, scenes and popular customs, far beyond the little I had been able to suggest to him. He was plainly intensely interested in our past in order to explain our present, and his knowledge is praiseworthy. There is, however, an exception to be noted: his characters were standard fictional caricatures out of the extensive stock that has been accumulated by the novelist in English during the past two centuries. The business man, for example, was the familiar figure of evil, ruthless and grasping, capable of murdering his own grandmother for a ten per cent profit.

The other personalities of the story were similarly done, and no nearer the truth than this preposterous figure. Artists have acquired the cynical habit of replying to strictures such as this by asking, "What is truth?" but the honest and capable among them know that they have a responsibility all the same. Marcel Proust declared it casually, one of the numberless gems that are strewn through the thousands of pages of *Remembrance of Things Past*, saying that we go wrong in the pursuit of truth by putting aside the difficult and arduous task of true introspection, out of which we may learn what is true, in order to

indulge our imaginations, which will tell us only what we would like to think. We follow Proust in pursuing the hard task of looking coolly at ourselves through our past as citizens. We are doing our share to get the record right, so that he who wishes can see how things really are. It

is difficult to believe in an endurable future unless we have hope of a people who recognize what they are and what they can do.

Respectfully submitted,

WILBUR H. GLOVER

REPORT OF THE 98TH ANNUAL MEETING

The meeting was called to order by President Julian Park at 8:50 p.m., October 13, 1959.

The following committee reports were heard: Members Advisory, by Chairman W. Allan Gardner; Markers, by Robert B. Meech; Finance, by Lewis G. Harriman; Civil War Round Table, by Chairman Brainard E. Prescott; and Lower Lakes Marine Chapter, by Chairman John R. Burke.

Mr. Walter S. Merwin reported for the Nominating Committee, presenting the following names for election to the Board of Managers: Charles Cary, Owen B. Augspurger, Rob Roy Macleod, George S. Staniland, and Charles G. Blaine. There being no further nominations these were elected by unanimous voice vote.

President Park reported the development of the parkway and other operations

about the grounds, and spoke of the importance of the publication of Rayback's biography of Millard Fillmore, together with other observations on the Society's activities.

Director Glover gave a report calling attention to the extensive public recognition received by the Society during the past year, and summing up the very considerable efforts contributed by volunteer workers.

President Park read the citation on Mr. John Lord O'Brian and presented to him the Red Jacket Medal, the Society's award for distinguished civic service.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

OWEN B. AUGSPURGER, *Secretary*

Report of the Committee on Markers

The past year has seen the work of this Committee so augmented that a veritable backlog of markers to be erected exists. The first to be erected this year is now in place on the Manufacturers and Traders Trust building at the corner of Main and Swan Streets. It was sponsored by the Bank and designates the place where Grover Cleveland, Twenty-Second President of the United States, conducted his law practice for seven years to 1881.

Early in the spring a small group, huddled close because of inclement weather,

dedicated the Shelton Square marker. This is within the iron fence of St. Paul's Cathedral, and faces the square named for the Rev. William Shelton, D. D., rector of the Church from 1829 to 1881. The marker also makes reference to military activity in the area during the War of 1812. This tablet was sponsored by St. Paul's Cathedral.

On the same day, another marker, sponsored by the Buffalo Automobile Dealers Association, was unveiled on the front lawn of the Thomas Industrial Center on

[*Seventy-three*]

Niagara Street between Ferry and Breckenridge Streets. It designates the plant in which the famous Thomas Flyer cars were manufactured. It was a Thomas Flyer that won the difficult endurance race around the world in 1908, demonstrating the fortitude of Buffalo men guiding the product of Buffalo craftsmanship.

On August 1, 1959, there assembled on Elnwood Avenue and Great Arrow Drive a cavalcade of what was once the most famous car in the world, the Pierce-Arrow. It attracted a large crowd. These cars and their owners were here for the national convention of the Pierce-Arrow Society of America. As part of the convention proceedings we were happy to be able to unveil, on the front lawn of the building now housing the Erie County Technical Institute, a tablet denoting the place where the famous car was manufactured until 1936. Mr. G. M. Tinney, President of the Buffalo Automobile Dealers Association, was present in behalf of the organization that donated the marker.

The marker on the Western Savings Bank was unveiled this morning.

Early this spring the Director and the writer donned boots and trudged through the mud of the island at the foot of Michigan Avenue, site of Chabert Joncaire's trading post in 1758. I assure you that each step heightened our regard for the wily and determined Frenchman, who must have encountered obstacles greater than mud. After a talk with Mr. Willard Meinecke, general manager of the General Mills Buffalo plant which occupies the site, and after looking over maps and blue prints, it was decided to place the marker on one of the buildings facing Michigan Avenue. Sponsored by General Mills, the marker is complete and shortly will be dedicated with due ceremony.

The M. H. Birge Company, 125-year-old manufacturer of wall paper, now on Niagara and Maryland Streets, is the sponsor of a marker commemorating the achievements of that concern. This has

just been delivered to the Society and we hope soon to place it on the building, facing Niagara Street.

Unexpected difficulty has attended the preparation of a marker on the site of the Black Rock. Drawings prepared for submission to the Board of Safety and the Planning Commission have been lost in the deluge of maps, drawings, papers, and other paraphernalia of our Committee. We hope shortly to re-survey the spot and move to finish the job. This difficulty suggests, perhaps, that the Committee has been active. The plaque to be placed in the entry of the City Hall is on order and we hope it also will soon be ready. This will mark the residence of Samuel Wilkeson.

Two markers have been replaced after having suffered vandalism. The police recovered the Mark Twain marker, and a new one was prepared to mark the site of the first church built in the city.

Research is proceeding on Palmer's Tavern, which is to be marked under the sponsorship of Mr. William Palmer, a member of the Committee, and on the Wells-Fargo Express terminal. Others are in the making, the Committee hoping for the patience and stamina to continue a task that is apparently much appreciated by many citizens, and is surely much needed.

Respectfully submitted,

I. FRANK MOGAVERO, *Chairman*

(Proceedings continued on page 94.)

Members Added in 1959

INDUSTRIAL

HOUDAILLE INDUSTRIES, INC.
MANUFACTURERS & TRADERS TRUST CO.
MARINE TRUST CO.
THE BIRGE COMPANY
374 DELAWARE AVE., INC.

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LIFE

ANDREWS, PETER CONNERS
BAIRD, WILLIAM G. (transfer from Annual)
CLARKSON, MAX B. E.
CLEMENT, DR. STEPHEN M. II
CONNORS, W. J. III
DARLING, HERBERT F. JR.
ESTY, ELBERTA L.
FLEISCHMANN, MANLEY

(transfer from Annual)

HODGSON, PATRICK (transfer from Annual)
HOFFMAN, DR. BURTON A.

(transfer from Annual)

HEKIMIAN, MRS. IVAN
HUTTON, JEFFREY KITTINGER
KELLERAN, CHARLES R.
KOEKKOEK, PETER M.
LINK, MISS ESTHER L.
LIPP, DR. WILLIAM F.
MURPHY, MRS. GLENN E.
NIEDERLANDER, MRS. DANIEL B.
NUSSBAUMER, NEWELL L.
PARK, DR. JULIAN (transfer from Annual)
PEACHEY, JOHN R.
PETRI, MRS. PITT
RIGHTER, MRS. JAMES H.
SCHOELLKOPF, J. FRED IV
SULLIVAN, KEVIN I.
SWIFT, HARLAN J.
WOOD, CHARLES H.

SUSTAINING

COX, EARL
DODD, R. E.
EMBLIDGE, WILLIAM R.
KNOWLES, PETER D.
STAFFORD, DR. WALTER F., JR.

ANNUAL

ANDREWS, WILLARD I.
BATTEY, MRS. FAY H.
BECKER, MAX, JR.
BERGANTZ, MRS. JOSEPH A.
BIEL, ERNEST
CLARK, JOHN E.
COCHRANE, WILLIAM J.
COLLINS, GEORGE JR
COPPINS, MRS. WILLIAM J.
DAMON, MRS. MASON

DANAHY, MISS FLORENCE
DEUEL, MISS VIRGINIA
DYETT, MRS. JAMES G.
FISHER, DR. DANIEL C.
FITCH, ALLEN HOMER III
FULLER, DR. ROBERT A.
GARRAHEE, MISS M. FRANCES
GLASS, JAMES E.
GORMAN, DAVID J.
GURNEY, ALBERT R.
HAMLIN, CLAY W.
HANNAN, W. KELLEY
HAYES, PLINY H. III
HAZEL, MISS MARGARET
HECKMAN, MISS MARGUERITE M.
HEIGAARD, MRS. ELSIE D.
HYMAN, JACOB D.
IRWIN, DUDLEY M.
IRWIN, ROBERT J. A. JR.
KAHLE, MISS ELIZABETH L.
KENN, EDWARD J.
KENNEDY, MRS. DAVID D.
KIMBALL, JOHN K.
KRITZER, MRS. CY
LAUBE, EDWARD J.
LETCHWORTH, GEORGE C.
LEWIS, CLARENCE
LYLE, ROBERT
LYMAN, DUANE
MAGEE, MRS. J. B.
MICHAEL, MISS EDWINE
MICHAEL, MISS JEANETTE
MOFFAT, HENRY G.
MOREY, MISS MARGARET A.
MORRISON, MRS. LOUIS B.
MOOT, RICHARD E.
MUNSCHAUER, RICHARD W.
MYERS, DON B.
NAYLON, MRS. HENRY M. III
O'BRIAN, ROLAND LORD
PEARCE, WILLIAM H.
PUTNAM, MRS. JOHN G. JR.
SAWYER, MRS. WILLIAM
SISTER MICHAEL THERESE
SMITH, LESTER W.
SMOLEV, MISS REBECCA
STEFFEN, MICHAEL
STEVENS, STEVAN I.
TAYLOR, FRANKLIN JR.

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TIRRELL, STANLEY A.
VAN KORN, ROBERT
WALLS, MRS. BRADLEY D.
WITT, MRS. WILLIAM J.

ASSOCIATE

BRENNAN, WILLIAM R.
BIRK, RICHARD L.
BROWN, RICHARD C.
CARMODY, MICHAEL L.
COHEN, DR. VICTOR L.
DAVIS, RICHARD W.
DELAHOY, ELLIS W.
DOW, PETER B.
FITZ-SIMONS, T. B. JR.
FORBES, J. MALCOLM
FRANCIS, FRED O.
FRIEND, THEODORE W.
FUGITT, DR. GEORGE W.
GARDNER, ARNOLD B.
GLOVER, MRS. A. J.

GRAUER, MISS DOROTHY W.
GRONEWOLD, DR. BENJAMIN F.
HARPER, HENRY H.
JANISCH, WILLIE E.
JEWETT, MRS. THEODORE C.
LEVINE, ALAN
LUHRS, H. E.
MARCUS, RICHARD
MIKULA, EDWARD J.
MILLER, MISS EMILY F.
POOLE, LEROY G.
RAMSDELL, MRS. C. M.
ROCKWELL, DR. HARRY W.

(transfer from Annual)

SANDMAN, JOSEPH T.
SHAW, JESSE R.
SMITH, DR. HENRY LEE JR.
THORNTON, MISS VIRGINIA
WARD, HAMILTON IV
ZELMAN, MRS. ARNOLD

This I Remember – XXII: We Build a Victorian House

by Charles S. Illingworth

IT WAS in 1895 that we built the house on St. James Place. I remember we would go out to where the house was being constructed where father would examine joists, scantlings, the setting of partitions and the bracings, marking with blue crayon, boards with knots, even checking the number of nails. All I was interested in was climbing ladders, walking joists and the iron "I" beam which ran from front to back to support the joists.

One day, father, mother and I went to New York City to talk with Durea and Potter. Whether this firm was decorators or architects, I am not certain. The morning after our arrival I ran from my cot in the sitting room to the bedroom to announce that a train of cars was going by, as high as the window, a block away. It was my first elevated. After breakfast in the hotel we went in a hansom to the Durea & Potter establishment. It was on

a cross street in what looked like a residence, for we went up porch stairs, through high wooden doors, into a hall with stairs leading to upper floors. We went into a large room off the hall where we met Mr. Durea.

Father and mother sat at a long table, while Mr. Durea showed them sheet after sheet of drawings, in color, one for each room. Each room was discussed, color schemes rejected or approved. Mother's ideas were incorporated where practical, until every room was accepted.

That night Mr. and Mrs. Durea took us to dinner at Delmonico's. In fact, we were entertained each night, including a trip to Manhattan Beach, where we heard Sousa's band.

Each morning we went somewhere to select furnishings. One day to a wholesale furniture dealer, the next day to Sloan's for carpets, where, after the pat-

[*Seventy-six*]

tern was decided upon, measurements were left so the carpet would be made up before shipping. Another day we went to a place for wall coverings. Then curtains and portieres were selected — three pair had special designs made to specifications. Then, to me, the most wonderful place of all.

Vantine's. Vantine was an importer of rugs, objets d'art and furniture from the Orient and Near East. Here were assembled bronze coffee sets and bowls from Turkey, ivory carvings from Japan, vases of Chinese pottery, literally hundreds of beautiful articles. Here we purchased Oriental rugs, a dozen or more.

Finally the gas fixtures, which had to be designed special.

To me the three boat trips we took and bathing at Manhattan Beach were the most enjoyable things we did. But while bathing I was knocked down in waist-deep water and an undertow started carrying me out, rolling me along the bottom. A man picked me up and brought me ashore, where they emptied the water out of me and sponged the sand off my face. I was so scared that I cried.

When we got back to Buffalo the builders were waiting for mother, for she had designed the front staircase, and the carpenter could not see how it could be constructed in the allotted space.

The stairwell was two stories high, with a seven-foot stained glass window on the west wall which could be seen from both floors. From the first floor the stairs wound upward in short flights; there were four landings, and direction changed four times in making the ascent. The baluster was shaped like Moorish arches. The corner of the balcony landing was supported by an octagon pillar from the hall floor.

When the interior was complete Mr. Durea came to Buffalo to supervise the finishing. The plaster was mixed with quantities of horse hair, and put on thick, to prevent cracking. Two artists came up from New York to do the decorating.

At the time we moved in and were settled the house appeared like this. A semi-circular veranda, with sweeping steps, opened into the marble-floored vestibule, where the oak wainscoting was four feet high, above which the walls were covered with embossed leather. The reception hall was paneled in quartered oak, and the walls above were painted horizon blue. On the walls, coming down about three feet from the ceiling, were painted Moorish arches, corresponding to the baluster of the staircase. In one corner was an oak mantel over a hearth of pink Italian marble with a green border. The floor was covered with oriental rugs. The gas fixtures were black wrought iron.

In the stairwell was a fixture of etched brass, suspended from the ceiling of the second floor, with ruby glass shades around the gas flame casting a soft red light on the stairs.

To the left a double folding door opened into the drawing room. On the hall side the door was oak, on the drawing room side it was birds-eye maple. Two pairs of portieres hung at this door, a deep, golden brown facing the hall, and toward the drawing room old rose, with a pattern of roses worked in gold thread appliqued, and a silk rope edge. The woodwork in this room, and in the adjoining music room, was bird's-eye maple, including two columns supporting a grilled arch which divided the two. The carpet for both rooms was a very thick Axminster, royal blue with the floral pattern in shades of rose and gold. The wall was papered in a deep pink and the ceiling painted a lighter shade with a circle of roses. All the ceilings were covered with canvas.

The chandelier had eight gas burners, with glass candles covering the burners from fixture to tip. From a small circle at the ceiling a chain, the links shaped like a small flower, led to each candle. The furniture was Louis XIV, with gold frames and upholstered in light blue damask, and Vernish Martin chairs. A

glass and gold cabinet and ebony table with a Dresden lamp completed the list.

The music room had a yellow striped paper and the ceiling was painted a lighter shade. From the chandelier, a ribbon was painted towards each side of the room, terminating in a group of musical instruments, violin and flute, and a sheet of music. Opposite the piano, between the windows, was a sofa covered with crimson brocade, two platform rockers, and other chairs. Folding doors gave into the dining room and portieres of deep yellow, appliqued with the same design as those in the drawing room, hung at the door.

The dining room was uniquely beautiful. It was panelled in quartered oak five feet high, above which the walls were covered with fine burlap colored dark green; on this was stenciled Empire wreaths. The ceiling was a pale green tint with horns of plenty and a formal design painted as a border.

The chandelier, in the center, terminated in a polished brass circle attached to which were three clusters of three burners each fashioned like candles. There were four side brackets of two candle lights each, the wall plate being shaped like fleur de lis. The floor covering was a thick oriental carpet with a green ground. Opposite the windows was a fireplace and a niche which contained the sideboard, the top of the back was carved with a horn of plenty, and the door panels also had carved horns of plenty, matching the ceiling motif. The table stretchers were carved with Empire wreaths and the chairs, upholstered in leather, had similar wreaths embossed on the backs. The heavy green portieres had a horn of plenty, made of leather, appliqued in the center. The radiator near the service door had a warming closet set in the middle of the coils, to keep plates or hot breads warm until ready to serve.

Back of the dining room was the conservatory, the outer walls being windows, on the frames of which were fastened iron

brackets holding individual plants. In the center was a large aquarium with running water and around the room, in front of the windows, were two shelves for potted plants, under which were coils for heating. The floor was tile. The conservatory was separated from the dining room by partitions and doors of leaded glass.

There was a butler's pantry with a built-in ice box which was filled from the back porch, and two other pantries.

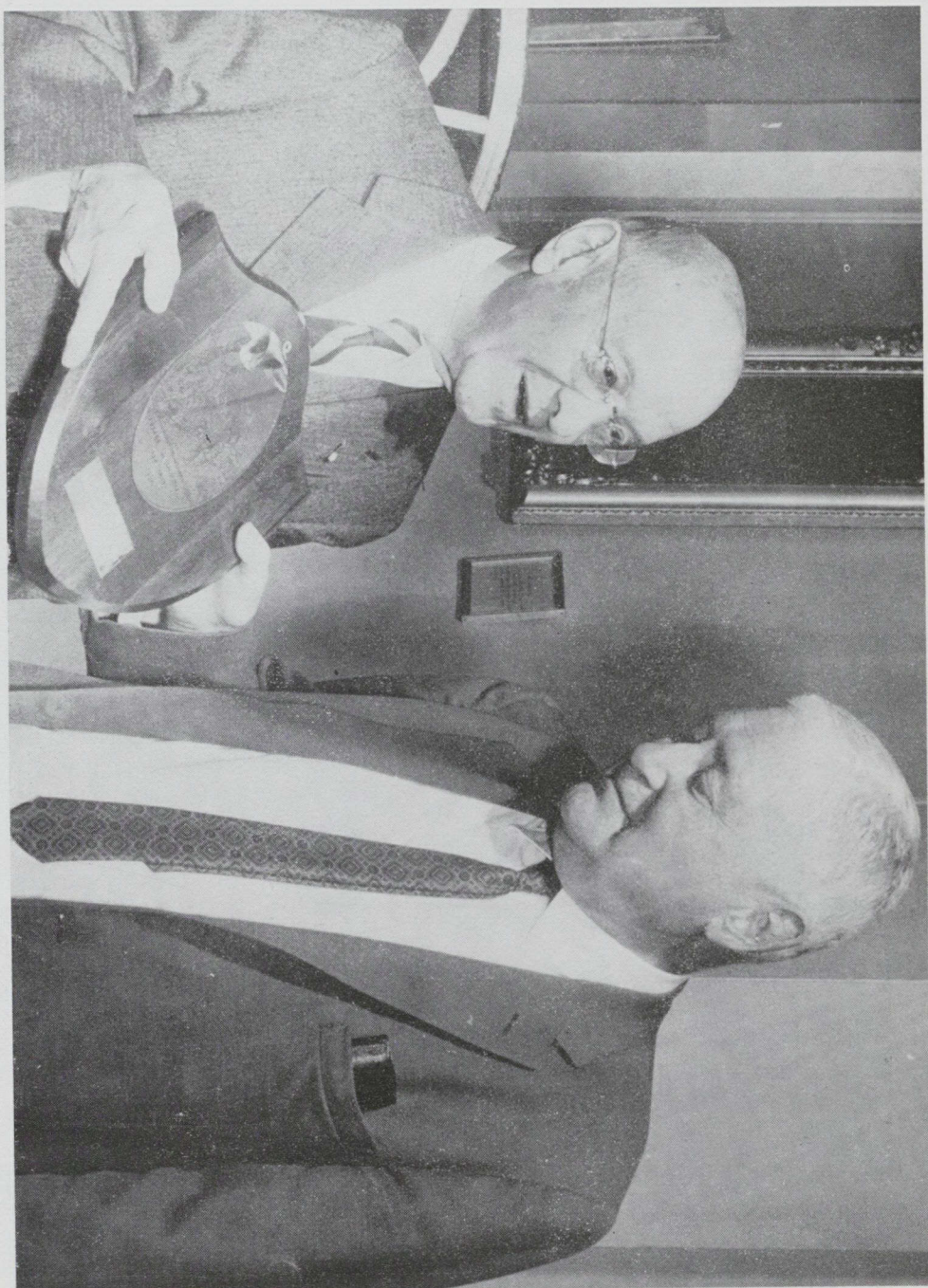
In the basement was the laundry, with built-in tubs and full-length windows, a toilet, a fruit cellar, a wine closet, and the main cellar, which held the bricked-in furnace with two fire pots (one for ordinary weather, the second for severe cold days), the coal bins, and another large room for drying clothes, etc.

The second floor had five bedrooms and a bath. Mother's bedroom and sitting room extended across the front of the house. Next was a guest room which had a garland of flowers painted on the ceiling, with a cherub in each corner of the room, holding it. On the ceiling of the niche which held the dresser, was painted a cherub driving a flock of butterflies.

Across the hall was my room, with a plain background with large panels of a flowered paper framed with a narrow moulding. Mama Scobell's room and the bathroom were at the end of the hall.

On the third floor, the stairs came directly into the ballroom, with an oak floor and tinted walls, illuminated by two chandeliers. In the rear were the maid's quarters and two closets lined with cedar.

We moved in that fall and when we were settled we gave a house warming. How well I remember it! Entertainment on such scale has disappeared with the passing of large private houses. The invitations were addressed by hand and mailed two weeks ahead. A caterer from the Hotel Broezel called and examined the kitchen and serving pantry. A menu was decided upon, and two days before the event wagons started delivering boxes of

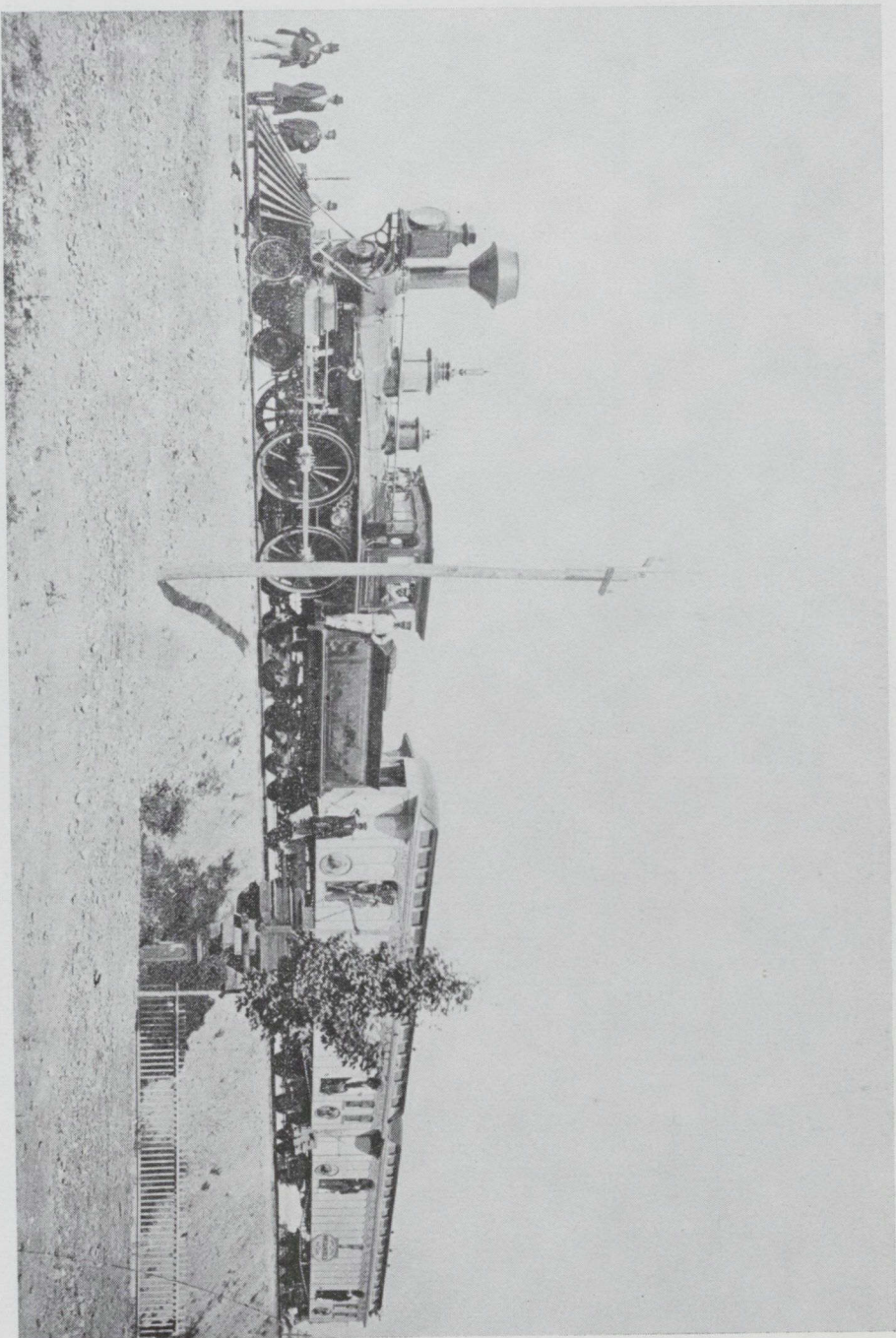


Mr. John Lord O'Brian receives the medal of the Red Jacket Award for Distinguished Civic Service from President Julian Park.



The Illingworth house at 132 St. James Place, substantially as it was built in 1895.

[Eighty]



Illustrating why so many passengers "crossed Jordan" in the old railroad trains: light engines and wooden cars kept damage to the trains at a minimum, but the splintering cars failed to protect occupants.



The Gilded Surrey Room was opened at a Benefit Ball. It provided over \$1100 to be used for the Library of the Society at the suggestion of the officials of the Hotel Sheraton. Mayor and Mrs. Frank A. Sedita, Mr. Don Cork (General Manager of the hotel) and Miss Mary Joan Brennan.

crackers and cakes, cases of wine, and other mysterious boxes and baskets.

The day of the party two chefs took possession, great tubs of ice cream were placed in the laundry, and I was banished from the kitchen. A canopy was erected from the curb to the veranda, which was enclosed in glass and provided with rugs and chairs to serve as a smoking room.

The floors of the drawing and music room were covered with duck. We had an early supper to clear the dining room, and went upstairs to dress, for the bedrooms had to be cleared for the outer wraps of the guests. The maid was to assist in mother's two rooms. The men used the guest room and my bedroom.

The musicians arrived early and were placed in the reception hall, the leader going to the ballroom to arrange chairs in one of the double dormers where they were to play for dancing, and the furniture in the drawing and music room was pushed back to the wall.

Mother came down stairs in a black lace over silk gown, décolleté with short sleeves. Mama Scobell in black satin, and father in tails. The guests began to arrive. A colored man admitted them and directed them to the second floor, "ladies to the front, gentlemen to either middle room". Both ladies and gentlemen changed to dancing pumps, before coming down to the drawing room, where mother, Mama Scobell and father were receiving.

Soon they were coming in a steady stream, and the rooms grew crowded: ladies in ball gowns with corsages and fans, their arms and necks white against their colored dresses, gentlemen with white vest, tie, and black swallow-tails, wearing white gloves. The orchestra of cello, flute, and violins, playing softly in the background of voices and laughter, made it an enchanting evening.

Dr. North, the Episcopal minister, was the first to depart, and gradually the older folks said "good night" and left.

Suddenly there was a squeal, and a

Scotch piper in tartan and kilts started parading up and down the reception rooms, killing the orchestra music and drowning all conversation. After rendering a couple of numbers, he led the way to the ballroom, where the guests assembled to watch two young ladies in Highland dress dance the Fling, and Sword dances. When they departed the orchestra struck up a two-step and all started to dance.

At a little after eleven supper was announced, and it was arranged that sixty could be seated at one time. When we went down stairs a transformation had taken place. Long tables had been placed in the drawing, music, and dining rooms all set with candles, flowers and silver, the chairs placed, and colored waiters standing in position. When guests were seated, a dinner of chicken, potatoes, sherbet and hot rolls was served. Wine was poured, relishes were passed, then all was whisked away and ice cream, cake, bonbons, nuts, coffee and champagne were served.

When all were finished, the tables were re-set and the second group was served. Three times the tables were filled, and a little after one o'clock the rooms were cleared and all evidence of eating was confined to the kitchen.

By this time all the guests but about thirty had departed, but before the waiters left they formed a quartet around the piano and sang several songs. It was four o'clock when the last guest had departed, and we went to bed. It was my first grown-up party, and I was thrilled. It had been wonderful.

Next morning we had breakfast at eleven, father announced that one hundred seventy-two had been served supper, nearly two hundred had attended. All that day I ate my fill of cake, candy and soft ice cream left-overs.



[Eighty-three]

Christmas Past In Buffalo: The Late 1910's

by Charles A. Brady

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Past."

"Long Past?" inquired Scrooge . . .

"No. Your past."

The Christmas Carol

ONE OF THE more pleasing penalties of growing old is the lengthening chain of memories we drag behind us like some happier Marley's ghost. In the nature of things, not all the memories can be blithe, of course, but the childhood ones tend to be; and the most precious of all these many childhood links are, surely, the Christmases we remember — the earlier ones more particularly. (Curiously enough, I do not think we differentiate Thanksgivings. There is really only one Thanksgiving in the album of memory; and it is almost invariably a good one.)

Was not the Spirit of Christmas Past the best of all three Christmas Spirits in *The Christmas Carol*, precisely because he was Scrooge's own personal, private past? So it is with most of us as the decades stagger on. We were allotted memory not only that we might have roses in December but also that we might wreath our hearts in holly all the year. Is this the kind of illusion that is out of place except in some Victorian keep-sake book? I choose to think, rather, that memory is transfiguration, epiphany, revealing inner reality.

When it comes to Christmas, we are all Proustians embarked, each one of us, on his or her own personal *Recherche du temps perdu*. And we don't need Proust's *madeleine*, either, or his cup of lime-flower tea. A crumb of fruitcake will turn the trick, or a glass of port or sherry, depending on what particular wine your family fruitcake happened to have been steeped in. Some such remembered taste or smell can make a moment of the past spring into the pure being of affectionate retrospect like one of those magical scenes in

a glass paperweight with immaculate snow forever swirling about tiny houses as perfect as the Attic shape "with brede of marble men and maidens overwrought" Keats wrote about in his *Ode on a Grecian Urn*. Only, unlike Keats' pictured scene, this we remember is no "Cold Pastoral," but one warmed by hearts and hearths of memory. It is our own individual Golden Age where each man jack of us plays his own commemorating shepherd bearing rosemary to the Crib.



MY OWN ESPECIAL Christmas preserve, fenced off and tidied like some Platonic Christmas card, happens to be the later 1910's. The chosen talisman to recall that enchanted era is a sticky balsam branch oozing thick December liqueur of sweet-smelling sap. One whiff of that potent woodland perfume and the memories come surging back, annihilating the later 50's with these latter years' more breakneck pace.

It was a different age then. It wasn't only that the 19th century, which had lingered on till July 1914, finally died in the latter half of this decade on the battlefields of Europe; that, even on our more sheltered shores, what Henry Seidel Canby used to call the Age of Confidence came to its regretted end. Even beyond this, things were somehow freer, more spacious, more leisurely. Perhaps the way in which the difference dramatized itself was that, while the reign of the motor car had already begun, to the child consciousness,

[*Eighty-four*]

at least, the horse still seemed king of the winter streets. That meant that, whenever snow fell heavily — and snow always did have a way of falling heavily in Buffalo — the world still ran on steel runners to the tune of sleigh bells instead of turning to the quicker, more neurotic tempo of a wheel milled in Detroit. It would be several years yet before the prescient Mr. Eliot could sum up the altered rhythm of our century of the internal combustion engine as a human engine — *Like a taxi throbbing waiting*. One still saw sleighs everywhere then: trim cutters; formal coach sleighs; heavy delivery sleds; for the small fry *Fleetwoods* and *Flexible Flyers*. The baker drove a sledge; so did the iceman — and there was not yet a Eugene O'Neill to make us associate the iceman's coming with a peculiarly gritty kind of death. Quite to the contrary, the iceman I remember best stood for a particularly abundant sort of life lived as adventure.

In my mind's eye I can see that *Webster's Ice* sledge still; and its epical driver who was, to a small boy looking on, as god Thor driving his goat chariot across the winter sky. Muscled like a blacksmith, and gifted with a sheerly glorious flow of rich poetic profanity, the black-jacketed charioteer took the snow banked curves in high. We used to hitch on behind, throwing our sled ropes over a projecting back-board, the snow thrown up by the straining team stinging our intent faces. If it was late enough in the afternoon for a cold blue dusk to be drawing on, the horses' hooves would strike out sparks and our own sled runners follow fiery suit. Talk of the poetry of motion! Let others sign on for the first moon flight — I have hitched on behind Webster's sledge with its ramping team of hero-Percherons!

What autos there were abroad then — at least on our quiet West Humboldt Parkway which was just beginning to be built up — tended to be tall, narrow electric cars moving slow like stately toys, with la-

dies at levers wearing awesome hats, or else the family doctor, reverend and revered as a very lord of life and death, mustached, a Jupiter, his stethoscope, as like as not, coiled inside his hat instead of in the accompanying bag. There were heavy carriage robes in those cars, for heaters were not yet common; and little silver vases to put long-stemmed roses in, since this was still a time when gentlemen bought flowers daily at the florist's as a matter of course.



A CHILD'S SELECTIVE eye will, in retrospect, make a white prairie out of a snow-choked field. But spaces *were* wider forty odd years ago. Squajaquada Creek, not yet filled in, ran under Main Street just before, walking south from Humboldt Parkway, one came to Delavan. That stream was locked in crystal all winter long. Where, looking down over the iron railing — one looked very far down, too, for the stream ran far below — in summer one could see frogs and water rats straight out of *The Wind and the Willows*, now there were only rabbit tracks in the snow. There might even be a delicate deer print once in a while, since, in that decade, deer were not unknown in the little woods that ran north from Forest Lawn. I remember one myself, as well as the many pheasants that left their arrowy tracks daily on our back porch.

[*Eighty-five*]

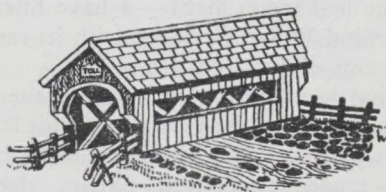
NO ONE IN his senses, I suppose, would argue that Christmas was more beautiful then, physically considered. The stores, the streets, the decorations are far, far lovelier now. But it is an inside loveliness, really, a ballet *décor*, like something designed by Diaghilev for music by Stravinsky; like a snow-scene framed in the plate-glass of a Fifth Avenue window. Ours had a honester, a less professional comeliness; and we did have one distinct esthetic edge. Christmas dinners were more ritual in those days, wearing as they did a thicker patina of tradition, and so more beautiful with the grave moral beauty of a gesture often repeated. Every salted almond had its own significance; and, at dessert, the ice-cream molds from Hoefler's made a London Yuletide pantomime out of the December 25th table. We don't write fairy-tales any more; and we don't dine off that most fairylike of all fairy foods, old-fashioned ice-cream molds in frozen pastel colors. It would seem that even our contemporary cuisine is lacking the vitamin of imagination.

Holiday musical resources are, of course, far richer nowadays. Merely by opening one's Hi-Fi cabinet, one can command greater orchestras than Prince Esterhazy or the Archbishop of Salzburg ever knew. All we could muster up, in our antediluvian pre-electronics day, was the dark-red mahogany Victrola that came into fashion after the huge black morning-glories of phonograph horns had had their brief day in the sun and then been relegated to the quiet attic. But, if the music was admittedly less great and the surface friction far more apparent on those old red-seal records, it could be very poignant, too — and it sounds even more poignant-sweet played now on memory's tinkling music box . . . Caruso . . . *The Clock Shop* . . . *The Hunt in the Black Forest* . . . an early fox-trot called, I think, but could not swear on oath, *Queen of the Movies* . . . *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* . . . *Adeste Fideles*. . . .

[Eighty-six]

That thin, scratchy music gets crossed by another sound, a sound one doesn't hear very often nowadays: the stage-thunder of coal rumbling into a bin over a metal chute's long runway. The coal bin was next to the fruit cellar. So remembered smells also orchestrate themselves in retrospect: the cellar smells of cider and apples; the upstairs smells of homemade bread and Christmas cookies; the study smells of mellow leather bindings warming by the fire — crisp India-paper Nelsons, the blue morocco Scotts, the red Dickenses, the Dumases in an imperial green.

All of which leads one to recall that the magazines, too, were somewhat different then. The incomparable *St. Nicholas* still flourished monthly. Like Christmas itself, the English children's annual, *Chatterbox*, in its gay board bindings, came but once a year, and was all the more welcome for that fact. Every four weeks *Delineator* punctually appeared, and *Pictorial Review*, and *World's Work*; and every seven days the *Literary Digest* with — to the questing child eye, that is — its mystifying but gratifying political cartoons. That once familiar paper-doll personage, Dotty Dimple, was always newly tricked-out for Yuletide. Palmer Cox's slant-eyed Brownies swarmed out of their enchanting subterranean dwellings in the *Ladies' Home Journal*; and, since these years, too, like certain other years we have known since, were war years, khaki-brown doughboys and blue-uniformed *poilus* fraternized everywhere in the December issues. As for the Christmas books in their rustling tissue wrappings — but that is a story in itself, one that cannot be told here.



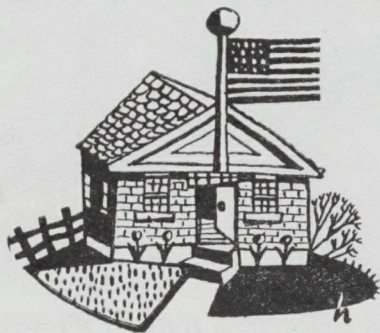
NO ONE WOULD wish to argue that super-markets are not all very well in their impersonal way, and, admittedly, marvellously convenient. But they are not, for all that, so picturesque — or so picaresque, either — as the open-air markets one remembers on old Washington Street and Jefferson Avenue, too, with their blue-thighed, trussed-up Christmas fowl hanging like something in a Flemish still-life. Nor does the smell of roasting chestnuts linger on the still, cold air as it used to, in 1916-1918, and for some years after that, outside the Public Library. Nor, finally, do we know any longer the mellow beauty of a candle-lit tree with that most magical of all the centuries' toys, a painted Noah's Ark, sailing valiantly over the polar waves the white sheet made about the tree's base. (This latter is no mere flourish, by the way. Have you tried to find a passable Noah's Ark recently? One not jerry-made out of that vilest of *ersatz* substances, plastic?)

But, take them for all in all, perhaps things are not so much changed as they may seem at first blush. After all, the Christmas tree remains itself. In a real sense, there can only be one Christmas tree. Though ours used to come down from northern Canada on the last autumn trip of my father's lumber barge, and though it towered up our stairwell to where the third storey began, my own lesser pyramid of fragrant light is really much the same as then. It is still true of Christmas afternoon, as Robert Hillyer sings, that

The tree, however, as the hush and dark
Gather in depth, shines at its loveliest.

In point of fact, all the best things have stayed substantially the same around our town: the snow that painted Buffalo years and years before Burchfield; the ice-chilled northern air tasting as of some white arctic wine; the growing excitement of the early December twilights as the 25th approached; the evening star pricking like a sword point through the apple-green winter sky; the other Star that goes on forever rising and setting in our human hearts because it rose and set first in a Heart that was also divine.

And the best thing of all is even better honored nowadays. It is the greatest of gains that, year by year, we come to keep the Founder of the Feast more in mind. Just look about at the *crèches* everywhere. For a few brief weeks this Buffalo of ours might be Assisi in the time of Francis; or an unsophisticated Tyrolean village. If, neo-Puritans as we seem to be becoming of recent years, we do not hold good Father Christmas quite so much in honor as we used to — and this, I think, is a loss — we have come to honor the Christmas Child more and more with each succeeding year. And therein, when all is said and done, lies the true essence of Christmas: that we strew over our welcoming hearts the golden straw of that manger that was in Bethlehem of Judaea that the Kings and the shepherds and the Christmas beasts may enter to adore the Crib.



SAYINGS AND DOINGS OF FRONTIER FOLK:

Crossing Jordan

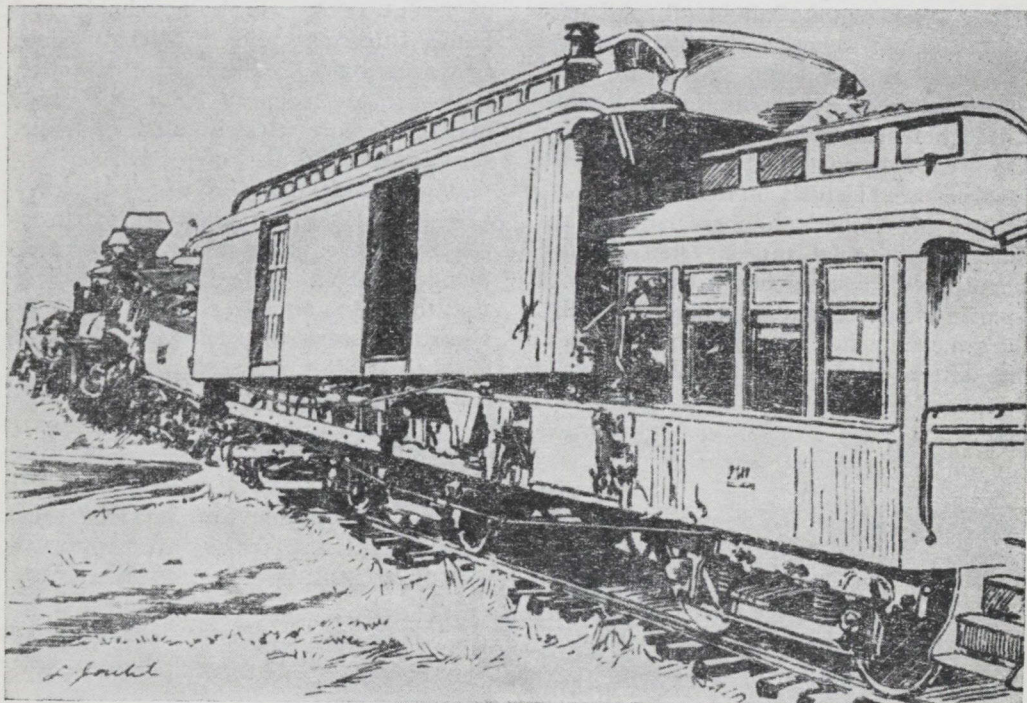
by Frank J. Lankes

ONE pleasant summer morning I visited the late John B. Moore at his Gardenville home and heard from him the following story. He was then a long retired railroad engineer who began his career at an early age on the Nickel Plate Road as a sort of traveling handyman. On September 14, 1886, he was acting as baggagemaster on eastbound Train 36.

The occasion was an excursion to Niagara Falls; the train was made up at Conneaut, Ohio, at 6:00 a.m. From there it was backed to Ashtabula for passengers. Business was good and when Brocton, New York, was reached the coaches were crowded. At Brocton a large group from Oil City, Pennsylvania, came aboard and John was asked to place some passengers

in the baggage car. He arranged trunks for seats and four young fellows bound for the Falls occupied them. They enjoyed the novelty of riding the baggage car and were having a good time for themselves.

At Silver Creek 36 was scheduled to pass westbound freight 37, which was to be waiting at a siding. Train 37 was not there but the flagman was and he reported that the engine of 37 was crippled and waiting near Irving to be pulled into a siding. So 36 proceeded out of Silver Creek. As it crossed a small stream one of the Oil City boys waggishly asked for the name of the river. Getting into the spirit of fun John replied, "This is the River Jordan, you are now crossing Jordan," at which there was a laugh.



The wreck near Silver Creek, from Harper's Weekly September 25, 1886.

[Eighty-eight]

During the interval between the flag-man's leaving crippled 37 and meeting 36 at Silver Creek something occurred of which he could not have been informed. Westbound Local 29 pulled up behind 37 and pushed it into a siding; 29 then proceeded westward.

Johnny Moore was standing in the open doorway of his car when he made that remark about Jordan. Almost immediately he heard a warning whistle and instinct told him that a train was approaching on the same track as 36. He looked ahead and saw 29 making a curve around an embankment and bearing down on the excursionists. He made a strong leap from the moving car, cleared the adjacent Pennsylvania track and ran up the embankment. There was a crash and a ripping, splintering follow-up as 29 and 36 met

head on. The baggage coach was lifted from its coupler to telescope the following daycoach. It was bad — people were killed, injured, and dying.

The wreckage was cleared and 36 proceeded to Niagara Falls. John returned with it to Buffalo that evening, where his trainmaster asked him to continue on to Irving on a chance he might be able to identify some of the dead. He had no acquaintances among the passengers but agreed to do so.

The freight shed at Irving presented a ghastly picture. Undertakers were at work by lantern light and seventeen dead were laid in a row on the floor under covers. Four were not yet identified. The covers were removed and John saw the still faces of his four Oil City riders. They had crossed Jordan.

The Cary Papers: Inventory and Sample

Edited by Lester W. Smith

Introduction

The Society plans to publish from time to time preliminary inventories of significant groups of manuscripts in its custody. The Cary Papers inventory, which we publish here, is such an inventory. An inventory is a formal document, intended to provide control and to serve as a finding aid to the collection, indicating the major series of manuscripts, their inclusive dates, and system of arrangement. Inventories are subject to revision and final editing as additional materials are acquired. The

Cary Papers constitute a valuable family archives and are a prime example of a major kind of manuscripts the Society needs to collect. It would take an extensive sampling of them to convey an effective idea of their value and research potential. To provide some idea of their flavor, we publish, following the inventory, a letter written by Thomas C. Love to his daughter, Julia Love (later Julia Love Cary) at the Seminary, Canandaigua.

Preliminary Inventory of The Cary Family Papers

THE CARY PAPERS in the Buffalo Historical Society comprise the personal and some professional and business manuscripts of three generations of a distinguished pioneer family of Western New York. They include the papers of Trum-

bull Cary of Batavia (b. Mansfield, Conn., 1787; d. Batavia, 1869) and of his brother, Ebenezer Cary; of Trumbull Cary's son, Dr. Walter Cary of Buffalo and his wife, Julia Love Cary; and of three of their six children, namely, Walter Cary 2nd,

[Eighty-nine]

Thomas Cary, and George Cary. The group also includes the papers of Maria M. Love, sister of Julia Love Cary, and a few letters of another sister, Elizabeth Love Cary. Julia Love Cary's papers, it should be noted, include letters received from her parents, Thomas C. and Maria Maltby Love, contemporaries of the first Trumbull Cary.

The Cary Papers are organized in a number of series, with various subseries as necessary. Usually, each series represents the papers written by, received by, or relating to a given member of the family. There is obviously an arbitrary element here; the papers of George Cary, for example, include his correspondence with his mother, Julia Love Cary. These letters might alternatively been set up as a subseries of the papers of Julia Love Cary; but they have been set up as a subseries of George Cary's papers.

The series entries in this inventory are arranged chronologically (inevitably with some overlap of chronology). The internal arrangement within each series is also chronological, with undated materials appearing last within the series. Cross references have been provided as necessary between the series. All presidential documents have been individually listed in the series notes.

The papers described in this preliminary inventory were presented to the Society through the generosity of George Cary and Charles Cary, and comprise 7 boxes (32 linear inches) of materials. It is planned to add to them a selection of the architectural records of George Cary. As additional manuscripts are acquired, this inventory will be revised to provide a systematic description of the entire group. The papers are available for use by qualified researchers. The inventory was compiled by Lester W. Smith, with the assistance of James M. Smith.

Cary Family

CONNECTICUT PAPERS, *ca.* 1822-33 1 folder
Papers relating to the senior Ebenezer

Cary's farm in Town of Chaplin, County of Windham, Mansfield, Conn., including description of farm; the junior Ebenezer Cary's power of attorney to Trumbull Cary, Nov. 12, 1822, re the Connecticut lands; accounts and receipts of C. F. Cleveland and of John Trumbull, lawyers, in connection with the estate; letters of C. F. Cleveland; and other papers.

MISCELLANY, 1828-1934.

1 folder

Printed materials, including 4 Anti-Masonic broadsides and circulars, 1828-32; and press clippings, 1934, re proposed gift by George Cary of the Cary Homestead in Batavia to the City.

Trumbull Cary

GENERAL LETTERS RECEIVED bonds, mortgages, and other papers, *ca.* 1804-47 (and 1 letter written to grandson, Thomas, Aug. 15, 1865).

1 folder

Includes Ebenezer Cary's bond, 1804, to Wm. Willink, etc., and letters from Alfred Cary, F. Granger, S. Grosvenor, H. J. Redfield, W. Seaver, A. H. Tracy, J. Wadsworth, D. Tomlinson, and others on political, business, and social matters; and copies of deeds, mortgages, and conveyances.

CORRESPONDENCE (chiefly LETTERS RECEIVED) and related papers, *ca.* 1807-49

10 folders

Business (and some personal) correspondence. Arranged by subject and thereunder chronologically, as follows:

Banks (Early), 1822-33. Includes materials relating to the Ontario Bank, Bank of Genesee, and proposed Leroy Bank. List of documents in folder. 17 pcs.

Buffalo and Black Rock (Early), 1819-34. List of documents in folder. 32 pcs.

Eagle Tavern, Batavia, 1835-49. List of documents in folder. 15 pcs.

Episcopal Church, Western New York, 1821-33. List of documents in folder. 5 pcs.

Holland Land Company, Indians, Tonawanda Reservation, *ca.* 1808-46. List of documents in folder. 101 pcs.

Post Office (Early), Western New York, *ca.* 1807-24. List of documents in folder. 19 pcs.

Railroads, 1834-36; 1855. List of documents in folder. 23 pcs.

War of 1812 — U. S. Storekeeper, 1813-19. List of documents in folder. 74 pcs.

War of 1812 — Pensions, 1816-25. List of documents in folder. 12 pcs.

Miscellaneous, 1824-41. List of subjects and of documents in folder. 25 pcs.

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS, ca. 1831-40. 1 folder
Data relating to household and farm accounts, labor costs, etc.

Dr. Walter Cary

CORRESPONDENCE (letters sent and received) with his parents, Trumbull Cary and Mrs. Cary, Feb. 15 - June 2, 1844 1 folder
Relates to his proposal to study in Europe.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE, 1862-72. 1 folder

Chiefly letters sent, including letter of 1863 and undated letter to Thomas Cary, concerning latter's choice of profession; 1 letter to his father, Trumbull Cary, dated Dec. 7, 1866; and promissory note, dated Apr. 27, 1872, to Thomas Cary for \$5,000, in connection with estate of Trumbull Cary.

Julia Love Cary

LETTERS RECEIVED from her parents, Thomas C. and Maria Maltby Love, 1836-53 (chiefly 1844-45). 1 folder

Chiefly written in Buffalo and addressed to her "at the Seminary, Canandaigua." Includes 3 letters written from Washington, 1836, by Thomas C. Love (M.C.).

LETTERS SENT to her children, 1867-68, from Buffalo, Baltimore. 1 folder

LETTERS SENT to her family, 1870-71, from Brussels (and Paris). 1 folder

LETTERS SENT to her family, Aug.-Oct. 1878, from Europe. 1 folder

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS SENT, 1890-1915.

Includes letters to Elizabeth Love Cary, Jan. 27 and 28, 1890; and to Walter Cary 2nd, from San Francisco, Sept. 3, 1915, on trip to Panama Pacific Exposition.

See also George Cary

Maria M. Love

LETTERS RECEIVED from Lowber Smith, Nathan Payne and Flora Payne (Whitney), 1868-69. 1 folder

LETTERS SENT to her family, Sept.-Oct. 1873, from New England. 1 folder

LETTERS SENT to her family from Europe, Aug. 1878-Apr. 1879. 4 folders

Consists of several groups of travel letters, as follows: Germany, France, the Riviera, Aug. 1878-Jan. 1879; Cairo, the Nile, Egypt, Jan.-Mar. 1879; the Holy Land, Mar.-Apr. 1879; Constantinople,

Athens, Naples, 1879.

LETTERS SENT to her family from Europe, Aug.-Nov. 1881. 1 folder

LETTERS SENT from Washington, Dec. 20, 1893 and Dec. 12, 1894. 1 folder

LETTERS SENT to her family from Europe, Feb. 20-May 27, 1900. 1 folder

Journal letters written during the Second Cleveland Administration. Includes also invitations to formal White House receptions, 1894, 1895, and 1896, and to cabinet dinner, Jan. 14 [n.y.]

LETTERS SENT to her family, 1905, from from France, Switzerland, Italy. 1 folder

LETTERS SENT to her family, Feb. 27-Apr. 16, 1908, during West Indies cruise. 1 folder

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS SENT, 1870-1923. 1 folder

Letters from New York City, Buffalo, Milan, Granada, Sevilla, and from San Francisco and the West Coast (the latter in 1915, on occasion of trip with Julia Love Cary to the Panama Pacific Exposition).

See also George Cary, Thomas Cary

Elizabeth Love Cary

LETTERS SENT to her family, Feb. 18, 1872, from Brussels, and Sept. 18, 1878, from Buffalo (re Westchester Polo Game.) 1 folder

Walter Cary, 2nd

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS SENT, 1874-95, from Buffalo. Includes letter to Jen, May 12, 1874, and letters to Thomas Cary, 1895. 1 folder

LETTERS SENT to Clara Wilder, 1894-1902, from Buffalo. 1 folder

LETTERS SENT to his family, Mar. 8-Apr. 8, 1908, on a West Indies cruise and from Isthmus of Panama. 1 folder

LETTERS SENT to his mother, to Thomas Cary, and Maria M. Love, 1909-10, during his trip abroad. 1 folder

Thomas Cary

LETTERS RECEIVED from Grover Cleveland, 1884-92; correspondence with R. N. McElroy re latter's biography of Cleveland, 1921. 1 folder

Contents. — A.L.S., Executive Mansion, Albany, N. Y., Sept. 28, 1884, declining invitation to Buffalo; A.L.S., Executive Mansion, Washington, Mar. 24, 1887, re his return trip to Buffalo, health of family, and omission of the Charity Ball; A.L.S., Executive Mansion, Washington, June 12, 1887, re stock in the Railway Register

[Ninety-one]

Manufacturing Co.; A.L.S., Executive Mansion, Washington, Apr. 29, 1888, requesting to be replaced on Board of the Parish Manufacturing Company, since he cannot attend meetings; A.L.S., Lakewood, N.J., Mar. 5, 1892, re use of his picture on the Penny Bank cards; L.S., Victoria Hotel, New York City, Oct. 15, 1892, thanking him for offer of hospitality in Buffalo; engraved invitation for White House receptions, Jan. 11 and 25 and Feb. 3 and 6, 1894.

LETTERS RECEIVED from Frances Folsom Cleveland (later Mrs. Thomas J. Preston), 1887-1916. *1 folder*

Contents.—A.L.S., Executive Mansion, Washington, Nov. 13, 1887, regretting inability to attend Charity Ball; A.L.S., New York City, Dec. 21, 1889, re inability to attend Charity Ball or to go to Buffalo "in any public way"; A.L.S., Buffalo, Mar. 6, 1890; A.L.S., New York City, Nov. 25, 1890; A.L.S., Nov. 27, 1891, informing him of no plans to visit Buffalo, but may bring out daughter in one of future balls; A.L.S., New York City, Nov. 19, 1892, re her mother's house and trip to Lakewood; A.L.S., New York City, Dec. 8, 1892, re attendance at Charity Ball, requesting no prior announcement of her attendance; A.N.S., [Buffalo?], Dec. 27, 1892 (?), on visiting card; A.L.S., Princeton, N.J., Nov. 19, 1901, enclosing photographs (snapshots) of Pan American Exposition and thanking him for conducting her there; A.L.S., Princeton, N.J., Oct. 4, 1903, expressing regret at Mr. Bissell's illness and announcing birth of Francis Grover Cleveland, 3 months since; A.L.S., Princeton, N.J., Mar. 6, 1907; A.L.S. (mourning paper), Princeton, N.J., Sept. 12, 1908, thanking him for expression of sympathy and flowers; A.L.S., Princeton, N.J., Nov. 24, 1912, thanking him for flowers and hoping to see him in Buffalo in late December; A.N.S., on calling card, Buffalo, Dec. 31, 1912, thanking him for flowers (with franked cover); A.N.S., Washington, Jan. 11, 1913; A.L.S. Princeton, N.J., Nov. 7, 1915, expressing sympathy at death of his mother (signed Mrs. Thomas Preston); mourning card, Princeton, N.J., Jan. 6, 1916, with note of thanks; and *undated* notes, as follows: A.L.S., Buffalo, Friday, to Miss Love; A.N.S., Wednesday, to Miss Love; engraved invitation to an "At Home," Westland, Princeton, N.J., Nov. 18, 19—; A.N.S., holiday greetings, signed Mrs. Thomas J. Preston (on picture post-

card of Graduate College and Cleveland Memorial Tower).

LETTERS RECEIVED from Rose Elizabeth Cleveland, 1885-86. *1 folder*

Rose Elizabeth Cleveland was sister of the President and White House hostess prior to his marriage to Frances Folsom. *Contents.*—A.L.S., Executive Mansion, Washington, June 27, 1885, regretting the President will be unable to gratify his friends in the "Niagara Park" matter; A.N.S., Executive Mansion, Washington, June 6, 1886, thanking him for "old Cleveland letters" and extending regards to Mrs. Cary and Miss Love.

LETTERS RECEIVED from William Howard Taft, 1905-17. *1 folder*

Contents.—L.S. War Dept., Washington, Oct. 18, 1905 (with cover); L.S., Washington, Feb. 1, 1908; L.S., New Haven, Conn., Jan. 17, 1915; L.S., New Haven, Conn., Feb. 1, 1917 (with cover); L.S., New Haven, Conn., May 6, 1917, advising against his going to Russia with Root (with cover); L.S., Pointe-a-Pic, Canada, Aug. 20, 1917 (with cover).

LETTERS RECEIVED from Francis Stevens, Mary Brower, and H. P. Brisbane, 1888-90, re family genealogy. *1 folder*

Written, respectively, from Lexington, Ky., St. Cloud, Minn., and Vicksburg, Miss.

LETTERS RECEIVED from Daniel S. Lamont, W. S. Bissell and Mrs. Bissell, and L. P. Norton, 1890-94. *1 folder*

Written respectively, from New York City, Washington and Boston, and Rhine-Cliffe-on-Hudson.

CHARITY BALL CORRESPONDENCE and related materials ca. 1882-1913. *2 boxes*

Materials relating to the annual Charity Ball held for the benefit of the Charity Organization Society.

George Cary

George Cary, distinguished architect, son of Dr. Walter Cary and Julia Love Cary, was educated at Harvard College (B.S., 1883), Columbia College (Ph.B., 1885), and L'Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, 1886-89. He married Allitheia Birge of Buffalo, Dec. 31, 1908. He died in Buffalo, May 5, 1945, in his 86th year, survived by his sons George and Charles and his daughters, Mrs. Allitheia Cary Lango and Mrs. Howard Bissell. A fifth child, Marion Love Cary, predeceased him. George Cary was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, a president of the Institute, a founder of the Beaux Arts Institute of New

York City, a director of the Albright Art Gallery, a member of the Board of Architects of the Pan American Exposition. In 1905 he published a study, *Grouping of Public Buildings and Gardens, with Adjoining Water Front Excursion Docks and Union Station, for City of Buffalo*. He was the architect of many public buildings and private homes in Buffalo, including the Buffalo General Hospital, the Gratiwick Hospital, the Buffalo Historical Society, the Buffalo Country Club.

LETTERS RECEIVED AND RELATED PAPERS,
1877-1917. *1 folder*

Includes an early letter, addressed "My dear boys," from their Uncle, George M. Love, Fort Hayes, Kansas, Feb. 16, 1878, describing life on their Grandfather Love's farm in Clarence, 1848-53; note of Walter Cary, 1880, for \$5,000 (est. of Trumbull Cary); materials relating to study at Harvard and L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris; letter received from Grover Cleveland, Washington, June 29, 1886, enclosing introduction to American Minister to France; letter from William J. Donovan, Aug. 4, 1913, expressing thanks for use of farm for troops; letter from Charles Eliot Norton, Cambridge, Mass., Apr. 27, 1906, re grouping of public buildings in Buffalo; letter from Mrs. Wolcott, Buffalo, Jan. 4, 1905, re civic improvements; letters received from his mother, Julia Love Cary, Maria

M. Love, and Elizabeth Love Cary, after his wedding; and letters from Mr. and Mrs. George K. Birge, Martha Gratiwick, Mildred Gratiwick Crane, Lavinia Austin Avery, Esther Goodyear, W. A. Wadsworth, Caesar Montagna, and Tilla Schwerdt, along with invitations, and printed and processed materials, including inventory of portraits, paintings, engravings, water colors, mirrors, furniture, etc., Feb. 15, 1906.

LETTERS SENT to his family, 1873-89 (and 1915) *1 folder*

Early letters from Buffalo, Jan. 12, 1873 and from Brussels, Feb. 22, 1877, and several series of letters (including a few letters received), identified as follows: New York City (social correspondence and letters written as a student at the Columbia College School of Mines); "Travel 1886" (France); "England, 1887"; "Travel, 1888" (Rome, Naples, Athens, Constantinople, Vienna, Berlin); "Paris letters, 1886-89;" and a letter to his mother, Julia Love Cary, San Francisco, Feb. 28, 1915, comparing art work at the Panama Pacific Exposition with that at the Pan American.

LETTERS RECEIVED from his wife, Allitheia Birge Cary, 1905-10. *1 folder*

LETTERS RECEIVED from Abigail Adams Homans, 1904-17. *1 folder*

See also Cary Family Miscellany

Thomas C. Love to His Daughter, Julia Love (Later Julia Love Cary), at the Seminary, Canandaigua.

[An Account of the Great Storm of 1844]

Buffalo, Oct. 21, 1844

My dear child

We recd your message & package by Mrs. Norton this morning at near 11 o'clock and your Aunt Chapin leaves in the morning. We are therefore now at near midnight writing you, as we know you will be disappointed, if you do not hear from us by letter when she calls to see you.

We are gratified to see your improvement in writing not only in the formation of your letters, but the accuracy of your spelling and the neatness of your letter, free from blots dirt & grease, affording ample evidence of your care and thought-

fulness. You know your Father always insists that people should *think*, beasts may act by instinct but rational beings are always bound to *think*. I am happy to discover in all your letters a plainness & familiarity of language, which constitutes the beauty & excellence of letter writing. I thank you for the purse and shall preserve it as the handiwork of my *Idol*. You will have seen by the paper sent you this morning, as well as learn from your Aunt, something of the dreadful visitation of our city by the late tempest, but nothing short of a personal examination of its destructive ravages can enable you to form any estimate of its extent and severity, in addition to the unexampled loss of life & property the destruction of the frail tenelements in the region of the Canal & Lake

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by which so many poor families are left destitute & houseless at this inclement season of the year. You will see ships & vessels scows and canal-boats lying in every position across bridges roads and ridges from 60 rods to one and an half miles from the water, in almost every part of the city; houses thrown down, unroof'd, turned about, chimneys off, etc., etc., etc. The suffering of every species of animal has been great; among the flood moved lumber & timbering that fills every street below the terrace from the Canal to the Hydraulics is to be found dead horses, cows, hogs & poultry of all kinds to the number of hundreds. My poor unfortu-

nate ware-house on the creek has the dock and roof with the chimneys & battlements entirely carried away; and few buildings in that vicinity have fared any better. Your uncle & Aunt Lois came in the Commodore Perry in the midst of the gale & entered the harbour a perfect wreck but no lives were lost in that boat. Your Mother & George are both writing & as I feel sleepy will say no more.

Yours affectionately
Thomas C. Love

Miss Julia Love
[At the Seminary,
Canandaigua]

(Proceedings continued from page 74.)

Members Advisory Committee Annual Report

The Members Advisory Committee is made up of twenty capable enthusiastic and dedicated members of The Buffalo Historical Society. Their attendance is consistently good at meetings held once a month, July and August excepted. Occasionally there are guests present to aid in discussions of problems close to them through their interests of their work. The duties of the Committee are divided into two main parts.

First; there are many activities open to our Society members. They have an opportunity to become active in their Society's projects whatever their individual interests are. This participation by members is not only an invaluable help to the Society, but at the same time allows our membership to be "doers", not just joiners. The Members Advisory Committee works to direct this energy down the best channels.

Second; the Committee has been responsible for many projects this year. We have been instrumental in having kitchen facilities installed in our building. This will be not only for the daily use of the staff, but also for "kick-off" teas for special

displays. During our recent Membership Drive, five members of the Advisory Committee served as captains and together with their teams increased the Society's ranks by seventy-five new members of all grades. We have worked on the 1870 Street since the beginning and have given much time and thought to what types of businesses should be shown. Another project that has been discussed is a Transportation Museum. It has been felt that methods of transportation made on the Niagara Frontier should be preserved here. The Annual Meeting and dinner combination was started by this Committee and seems to have met with wide-spread approval. It was felt that this could be a good way to bring the new and existing members together in a more pleasant and informal way. The fact that our Society will soon be one hundred years old has dictated a need to plan commemorative activities to celebrate this event in 1960. Few Historical Societies can boast as long and fine a history as ours.

Although this Committee serves in strictly an advisory capacity, and has no

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direct authority, its presence is felt in the day to day life of the Society. The Members Advisory Committee is and will be working to make The Buffalo Historical Society a more enjoyable and useful place

in which to view the progress of history on our Niagara Frontier.

Respectfully submitted,

W. A. GARDNER
Chairman

Books You May Want To See

Tramping for Hoover. A. Conger Goodyear. Pp. 57, photographs of Herbert Hoover and Jan Masaryk. New York, Privately printed, 1959.

Conger Goodyear is a prime example of the man of affairs, a quondam Buffalonian, who is taking care to insure the preservation of his personal papers. The Buffalo Historical Society is already indebted to him for some valuable reminiscences which have been published in *Niagara Frontier*. In the present publication, privately printed, he ventures into the realm of pure documentary publication, that is, the publication of the full text of some of his personal letters, with very brief commentary. The letters relate to the economic reconstruction of Europe following World War I. There is much here to whet the historian's appetite, which is whetted by documentary publication as it is by no other. Documents are the stuff of history, and without them history is conjecture. And it is especially appropriate that Mr. Goodyear should publish his correspondence with Herbert Hoover. It was Hoover who, with the establishment of the Hoover Library at Stanford, did so much to encourage officials to take responsibility as early as possible in their careers for the preservation of their personal archives. The lesson is clear. By analogy, on the local or regional level, the men and women who have contributed significantly to the events of their area should be taking comparable steps for the preservation of their papers.

Mr. Goodyear takes his title from an article published in the *Saturday Evening*

Post some years ago, entitled "Hoover's Tramps Abroad." This article, writes Goodyear, "told, in a general way, about the activities of various commissions created by Hoover operating in Central Europe. I was one of the tramps. The countries where I worked are still centers of unrest. The subsequent pages will present a picture of what those regions were, and, in a large degree, still are. At the same time I want to record my admiration for the best boss I ever had — Herbert Hoover."

Mr. Goodyear then proceeds to publish the text of twenty-seven letters to Hoover that he wrote as President of the Coal Mission of the Supreme Economic Council for the Territory included in the Former Empire of Austria-Hungary and Poland. The purpose of this mission was to increase the coal production and to supervise the distribution of coal so produced, in the coal fields of Czechoslovakia, Upper Silesia, and the former duchy of Teschen. Goodyear observes: "We were there without invitation and few pleasant cries recorded our advent. They were more audible at our departure." These letters (pp. 1-31) were written between May 7 and August 13, 1919, from, en route to, or in the environs of the following cities: Mährisch-Ostrau, Warsaw, Berlin, Danzig, Prague, Vienna, and Paris. In the next section (pp. 32-43), he publishes three letters he wrote relating to his activities in connection with the Upper Silesian insurrection, dated August 21-24, 1919, from Kattowitz and Breslau, together with one letter received from Hugh Gibson, dated Warsaw, January 29, 1921. Finally, in the

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appendix (pp. 45-57) he publishes thirteen letters and telegrams he received from Herbert Hoover, Director General of Relief for the Supreme Economic Council, dated Paris, May 2 to September 6, 1919; and one letter received later, dated Washington, D.C., January 14, 1920.

These letters are published with only the briefest editorial comment, in the sound belief that documents speak very effectively for themselves. They are official letters, but their writer was anything but a professional bureaucrat, and they are completely free from officialese, the kind of writing known as Federal prose. Their value to Hoover must have been enhanced by their writer's skill at characterization, his insight in appraising men and events, and his sense of humor, including the vital ability to smile at himself. Goodyear's account of the manner in which he was abruptly promoted to the rank of General by a wireless operator who misread his insignia, to find himself seated at a state dinner party the next evening as General Goodyear, between a Minister and the Mayor of Warsaw, makes amusing reading. Many of the leading statesmen of Europe appear in these pages. A young American, Robert A. Taft, is also referred to in an account of a meeting with Hoover in Paris, where "they pumped me dry on Central Europe but kept me moistened up otherwise." At one point,

irked by a driver who had run off with his car, Goodyear wrote, "This made me mad and I issued an ultimatum — which has been as harmless as a peace conference so far." At another point, he wrote of a morning spent with a personal emissary of Hoover, "[who] seems sane, which means we agree on the utter idiocy of the peace conference." Such observations add color to these full and substantial letters of important work accomplished.

On the purely editorial side, the volume would benefit from a table of contents, in the nature of a list of the letters reproduced. The same type face is used in printing the letters as in Goodyear's editorial commentary, but since the latter is kept to a minimum, no confusion should result.

Mr. Goodyear's little volume, which as a physical object is an attractive piece of book making, will take its place, for its contents, on the shelves of research libraries, along with such source materials as the *Memoirs* of Herbert Hoover, various official State Department publications, and various publications of the Hoover Library, as a contribution to the documentation of these times. In preserving and now bringing these letters forth he has performed a real service to scholarship.

LESTER W. SMITH

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Joseph Ellicott and the Bank of Niagara

by William Chazanof

IN ADDITION to his responsibility for selling land and encouraging projects that would attract settlers to western New York, Joseph Ellicott faced knotty problems associated with money and banking. Prior to 1812, using the post for the transmission of funds in western New York involved serious dangers. Company remittances included much paper money, which, when stuffed in bulky letters, attracted attention. As Agent-General Busti himself explained it, such packets excited "the covetousness of the many sharks lurking for prey in the post offices" between the Genesee and Philadelphia. To lessen the dangers, he instructed Ellicott to send bills of larger denomination and, adding a penny-pinching thought, pointed out that lighter letters also saved money on "heavier postages." Despite the less conspicuous parcels, Ellicott worried over each shipment until he received confirmation that the money he had sent had arrived safely. What is more, he resorted to various devices to insure greater safety for his remittances. Thus it was that he sometimes tore the bank bills in half and shipped each separately; or, when he did not tear the bills, he frequently sent a description of the serial numbers of the bank notes that he had already mailed. By these methods, if any theft occurred, Paul Busti had the information necessary to advertise promptly the loss of the stolen bank notes.¹

All the trouble that Ellicott had over the safe shipment of remittances to Philadelphia added to his appreciation of modern banking facilities, yet did not blind

him to their hazards. For one thing, as Resident-Agent he valued the conveniences of the banks' paper money, for remittances of gold and silver increased the bulk of the Company parcels. At the same time, he was suspicious of the soundness of the "bushels of banks" that sprang up during 1812. What he needed was a bank that was in strong financial condition, that would redeem paper money and transfer Company funds to other banks, and that was located near to Batavia.²

Ellicott's quest for such a bank seemed to end when the Ontario Bank in Canandaigua was established in 1813. He reported this event to Busti and added that the "knowing ones" felt that this bank would be a "profitable institution." He was particularly pleased that the directors of the Ontario Bank agreed to arrange with the Union Bank in the city of New York to redeem paper money and assured him that they would transfer Company money to any bank in New York City which he designated. On the strength of these promises, Ellicott deposited the Company receipts in the Ontario bank of Canandaigua. The Ontario Bank recognized Ellicott's importance, for three years later the directors of the bank elected his nephew, David E. Evans, a member of the board.³

For a time this bank solved Ellicott's problems of deposit and discount, but the establishment of a branch of the Utica Bank in Canandaigua threatened the stability of the Ontario Bank. The Utica branch competed with the Ontario institution by discriminating against its bank notes, and made it extremely difficult for

1. Paul Busti to Joseph Ellicott, July 18, 1810; Joseph Ellicott to Paul Busti, May 3, 1813, to ?, October 13, 1814. These and other manuscripts letters cited are from the Joseph Ellicott Collection, Buffalo Historical Society, unless otherwise noted.

2. Ellicott to Busti, May 4, 1811, July 15, 1812.

3. Ellicott to Busti, March 25, November 5, 1813; William Kibbe to Ellicott, November 13, 1813; *Buffalo Gazette*, June 11, 1816.

the Ontario Bank to discount the many notes that Ellicott deposited there. From the start, Chauncey Loomis had opposed the Utica branch as a "foreign Bank" and preferred that the local people create their own financial institutions, if another be needed. Ellicott, however, felt confident that the Ontario Bank was strong enough to withstand the competition of the Utica Branch. In fact, he was convinced that the Ontario Bank was stronger than the city banks. To support his view, he cited the questionable policy of the city banks which accepted as collateral personal property and "the credit the shopkeepers may possess," and compared it with the Ontario Bank's sounder program which stressed freehold estates as security.⁴

The policy of the Utica branch in regard to the Ontario Bank notes accentuated Ellicott's wariness of the kind of notes that he himself would take in payment for the land. In truth, it was a problem to keep up with the latest reliable information as to which banks and currency were sound. Bank failures occurred frequently. In addition, the State Legislatures granted numerous charters for the formation of new banks; thus, new institutions came into existence with insufficient backing and further complicated the situation. Ellicott recognized this and did not feel great pressure to accept all bank notes. His customers themselves did not "generally consider that the Company's agents [were obliged] to receive notes of any Banks" unless the banks in New York and Philadelphia accepted these same notes. Thus, Ellicott flatly refused to accept the notes of the "litter of Banks" that the Pennsylvania Legislature had incorporated in the winter of 1813-1814. Generally, he did not take notes from banks south of Pennsylvania. By the end of 1814, Ellicott recognized only the notes

of banks in New York State and Philadelphia, and, on occasion, those banks of New Jersey. This practice he violated only when "a sale could not be effected without such accommodation to the purchaser".⁵

In addition to the uneven value of the various bank notes, the currency situation worsened when a shortage of specie occurred shortly after the War of 1812. The inhabitants of western New York, lacking sufficient American specie, were forced to use a bewildering variety of currency: six pence, shilling, Spanish dollar, copper cent, English crown and half-crown, English guinea, Louis D'Or, and Napoleon. Traders, fortunately, accepted these foreign coins. Ellicott blamed the scarcity of hard money on two main factors: the recently chartered New York State banks issued notes of questionable value that drove specie further out of circulation; and British merchants had flooded the United States with merchandise for which they accepted mainly specie in payment. Those living on the Purchase who owned specie also aggravated the shortage by clinging to, rather than circulating the specie. Toward the end of 1815, specie had nearly gone out of circulation.⁶

With this almost total disappearance of specie, the settlers in western New York experienced economic hardships. To make matters worse, the cold summer of 1816, with frost and snow in June, greatly reduced the crops. What food provisions remained brought high prices because of their scarcity; pork sold at twenty-eight dollars a barrel, and flour retailed at fifteen dollars a barrel. To compensate for the high cost of living, both skilled and unskilled labor needed high wages, and

4. Kibbe to Ellicott, July 22, 1814; Chauncey Loomis to Ellicott, February 27, 1815; Ellicott to Busti, October 21, 1814.

5. Ellicott to Busti, November 14, 28, 1814.

6. Samuel M. Welch, *Home History, Recollections of Buffalo during the Decade from 1830-1840* (Buffalo, Peter Paul and Brothers, 1891), p. 167; Ellicott to Busti, March 15, August 12, September 13, 1815.

this in turn discouraged the construction of buildings.⁷

This economic recession, marked by the variety of paper currency and insufficient specie, precipitated demands for a bank in the Buffalo area. The advocates of such an institution hoped that trade would be stimulated by loans and better currency circulation. Before the sponsors of a bank in Buffalo asked the Legislature for a charter, however, they consulted Ellicott. Ebenezer Walden, in behalf of the committee of sponsors, solicited the Resident-Agent's "influence in carrying the object into effect."

The Committee expects much aid from you on account of your standing with the principal men of the State & being friendly disposed (as it is understood) towards the measure.

Any communications you may think proper to make on the subject will be well received by the Committee.⁸

Ellicott approved the establishment of a bank in Buffalo and candidly said: "It is true a bank is much wanted at Buffalo, and I think it would only be proper for the Legislature to grant them an act of incorporation" However, Ellicott specified the conditions that such a bank would have to meet before he would use his political influence in Albany to obtain a charter or give his support as a depositor. He objected mainly to "the principle of forfeiting the charter in case of non-payment of specie, while all other Banks are at liberty at their discretion to refuse specie payments" on the ground that no new institution could survive with such a

handicap. "A Bank at Buffalo," he argued, "would not I think retain its charter long upon that plan." Ellicott wanted the charter of the bank at Buffalo to be similar basically to other bank charters and to have their freedom of choice in the exchange of specie and paper notes. Otherwise, Ellicott concluded with finality, "I shall never subscribe any of my funds to such a tramelled institution." He explained his ideas to Senator Chauncey Loomis and urged that the Senate "see this subject as I do and grant a charter upon the principle of other banks untrammelled with specie until other banks pay specie. . . ."⁹

Although Ellicott seemingly altered his stand when he now insisted on a "non-specie" bank, he was merely taking a practical approach to an extremely complicated problem. It is true that he had complained for several years prior to this about inadequately backed paper notes and the "bushels of banks" that lacked sufficient security. Yet, as a capable business man, he realized that since so many of the banks were "non-specie" banks, it would not be possible for a new specie bank at Buffalo to survive against such competition. He was not reversing his original position; he merely wished to permit the new institution to survive its formative years and hoped that it would later establish itself on a sound, hard money basis. The decision on the character of the bank, nevertheless, depended on the Legislature.

In 1816, the Legislature voted to authorize a bank in Buffalo called the Bank of Niagara. The charter approved a capital of five hundred thousand dollars and limited the period of operation to sixteen years; despite Ellicott's opposition, the Legislature designated the Bank of Niagara as a specie institution. The many bank failures due to inadequate hard money backing had persuaded the State Legislature to insist on a specie bank for Buffalo.

7. James L. Barton, "Early Reminiscences of Buffalo and Vicinity," (Buffalo Historical Society, vol. 1, 1879), p. 166; Truman C. White, *Our Country and Its People* (Boston, The Boston History Company, 1898), I, 257; Ellicott to John J. Vanderkemp, June 28, 1816.

8. Ebenezer Walden to Ellicott, November 17, 1815.

9. Ellicott to Chauncey Loomis, February 14, 1816.

Even though Ellicott had resisted a specie-type bank, once the Legislature chartered the Bank of Niagara, he felt it desirable to support it. He agreed "to attend and superintend the subscription" of the Niagara Bank stock when it went on sale. He urged Busti to invest a minimum of twenty thousand dollars of the Company money in the shares of this bank and optimistically pointed out that a fifty-thousand-dollar investment would be safe. Such a bank, maintained Ellicott, would raise the value of the Buffalo land, as well as pay good dividends.¹⁰

Even before the Legislature authorized a charter, Ellicott had considered election of the directors. He made clear that neither he nor his nephew, David E. Evans, could accept the position; neither of them had "time to devote to that service." Nevertheless Ellicott believed that two of the bank directors should come from Batavia and suggested the names of his friends, James Brisbane and Trumbull Cary. As additional members of the board, he preferred William Peacock to Zattu Cushing and hoped that Chauncey Loomis, too, would be chosen a director. In this way, the Big Family would have representation on the Board of Directors and share in whatever power the bank would eventually have.

Like Ellicott, the Porter brothers had their eyes on the stock as well as the directorships of the Bank of Niagara. Peter suggested to brother Augustus that they and their business friends should buy enough stock in this bank to gain influence there. The Porters also thought in terms of specific people on the board. "I think on the whole," said Peter Porter to his brother, "that ourselves, Barton, Townsend, Bronson, Thompson & Sill ought to take so much as to give us a respectable influence, and if we do patronize it, we

10. *Laws of the State of New York*, 39th session, pp. 184-189 (April 17, 1816); Jonas Harrison to Ellicott, May 28, 1816; Ellicott to Busti, May 13, 1816.

shall I presume get at least two [directorships]"¹¹

The stockholders of the Bank of Niagara met July 1816 and elected thirteen directors: Augustus Porter, Ebenezer Norton, Isaac Kibbe, Chauncey Loomis, James Brisbane, Archibald S. Clarke, Jonas Williams, Benjamin Caryl, Jonas Harrison, Ebenezer Walden, John G. Camp, Samuel Russell, and Martin Prendergast. Ellicott managed to get four dependable friends on this board: Loomis, Brisbane, Clarke and Harrison. The directors came not only from Buffalo but also from many places outside that village. By distributing the directorships geographically, the bank planned to serve western New York rather than Buffalo alone.

Two weeks after the stockholders elected the board, the Niagara Bank directors chose Isaac Kibbe, president, and Isaac Leake, cashier. Originally, Ellicott wanted Augustus Porter as president but then he switched his preference to Kibbe. Three years after the board elected Kibbe president, Ellicott revealed the reasons for his change: first, he was impressed that DeWitt Clinton has recommended Kibbe; second, he was encouraged by Kibbe's claims that he possessed some eighty thousand dollars, mainly in liquid capital; finally, he was influenced by Kibbe's assertion that if he moved to Buffalo, his wealthy friends would settle there too. Ellicott admitted to Busti that "not doubting from the circumstances of this gentleman's being so highly recommended by Mr. Clinton that everything he said was fact, I used my influence, when the Niagara Bank went into operation to procure him to be elected president thereof."¹²

11. Peter Porter to Augustus Porter, June 2, 1816, Augustus Porter Papers, Buffalo Historical Society.

12. *Buffalo Gazette*, July 9, 23, 1816; Jonas Harrison to DeWitt Clinton, January 29, 1818, Jonas Harrison Letterbook, 1813-1819, Buffalo Historical Society; Ellicott to Busti, May 19, 1819.

With the sale of Niagara stock and the election of the first officers, the Bank of Niagara opened its doors in October 1816 and experienced considerable success in its initial operations. Because of the caliber of the men who supported the bank, many people were anxious to buy stock and, as a result, shares sold for ten per cent above par. Upon Ellicott's urgings, even the circumspect Busti purchased fifty shares. Many Canadians also bought Niagara stock, and at Fort Erie in Canada the commanding officers proposed to exchange British guineas valued at ten thousand dollars for a like sum in notes of the Bank of Niagara. The investors in this bank expected the Niagara notes to become the circulating media not only in western New York, but also in the Michigan territory. In serving such a large area, the bank would circulate more money than it possessed in actual capital and, at the same time, could give its stockholders large dividends. These hopes seemed to be coming true, for in January 1817 the directors declared a nine per cent dividend.

For a time, Ellicott and the Bank of Niagara found each other mutually helpful. Ellicott gave the prestige of his name in support of the bank and this attracted stockholders as well as depositors. He intrusted foreign notes and specie to the bank and accepted Niagara notes in exchange. The bank, in turn, by loaning money to the farmers, made it possible for the Company to collect its debts. Thus, Ellicott confided to Busti, "had not this Bank been chartered I am impressed in opinion that we should have found it difficult to have obtained sufficient Amount of circulating medium to have paid the Taxes of the year." Ellicott never forgot the banking inconveniences that he suffered during the first dozen years of his Agency and appreciated the proximity of the Bank of Niagara.¹³

13. Ellicott to Busti, October 15, November 27, 1816, January 31, February 12, 1817.

While many signs pointed to a prosperous future for the Niagara Bank, portents of trouble appeared early. Many of the bank loans of the first three months had been made to farmers on the security of their grain crops. When the summer of 1816 proved to be unusually cold, the farmers had such a poor harvest that they were unable to meet their obligations. In addition to these poorly secured loans, the directors disagreed on the credit relationships to be established with the New York City Banks. On this matter, the board sought Ellicott's opinions. He promptly advised the institution not to issue excessive paper credit that would eventually find its way to the New York City banks on the ground that it might be impossible for the Bank of Niagara later to redeem this paper in specie. For a short time, the bank followed Ellicott's advice; however, it soon ignored this sensible policy. As a result, the Niagara Bank permitted so many paper notes to circulate in New York City that when it was forced to redeem them in specie, it practically stripped itself of hard money assets. Thus, the Bank of Niagara notes, rather than specie, became "almost the only medium [of exchange] in western New York."

This condition and some of the operations of the Bank of Niagara disturbed Ellicott. He worried, for example, because the New York banks took Niagara notes only at a discount, and forced the Company to suffer a loss in this exchange. He was annoyed, too, that the bank did not maintain a stable credit arrangement in New York City as he had recommended. The Bank of Niagara, in short, had become a "nuisance" to Ellicott. Therefore, in March 1817, he instructed Peacock not to accept Niagara notes unless they could be exchanged for those of an accredited bank.¹⁴

14. Ellicott to Isaac Kibbe, October 15, 1816; to William Peacock, March 7, 1817; to Isaac Leake, April 7, 1817.

In addition to Ellicott's reduced support, many other factors by the summer of 1818 weakened the Bank of Niagara. Business decreased in part because post-war immigration had dropped sharply, thus lessening the buying power in the western sector of the state. More important, most of the bank directors, including President Kibbe, had "drawn out large sums of money, [or] indorsed for others to a frightful amount." Greatly concerned, Peacock reported to Ellicott that "J. B. [James Brisbane] is in for 14 or 15 thousand, Camp for 8 or 10, Carryl for 15 or 20 and God knows how many others for the Like sums . . ." Ellicott believed that some of the directors had deliberately discredited the bank so that the bank notes depreciated in value; in this way, these directors, as debtors, repaid their loans more easily by using Niagara notes as tender. The local newspaper, the *Niagara Journal*, weakened the people's confidence in the bank still more when it attacked the institution and especially singled out director Archibald S. Clarke, Ellicott's nominee, as a target.¹⁵

Not only were many of the directors exploiting the bank, but the political aspects of the situation were equally disturbing. Since it was necessary for the State Legislature to grant permission for the bank to begin its operations, those who sought the charter were compelled to bargain with key legislators. As a result, some of the legislators exchanged their votes for gifts of bank stock. DeWitt Clinton, one of the leaders of the Republican Party, for example, borrowed three thousand dollars "the moment the Bank went into operation" and President Isaac Kibbe had quickly endorsed this loan. But the three thousand dollars did not satisfy Clinton and he increased this sum to forty-five hundred; again Kibbe underwrote Clin-

ton's note. Requiring additional funds, Clinton now sought to enlarge the loan "considerably" more than forty-five hundred dollars, but at this point, Isaac Leake, the cashier, refused his request. The cashier explained that Kibbe, the sole endorser of Clinton's loans, had proven to be poor security himself; that Kibbe's story of his so-called eighty thousand dollar estate had all been a lie for "probably a more plausible man than Mr. Kibbe never existed."¹⁶

Leake's refusal to approve the additional loan to Clinton precipitated a bitter quarrel between the cashier and the president. Kibbe had approved many loans, even when the bank was "hard pinched to sustain its credit." Many of these borrowers had made no repayments. When Leake protested, the glib tongued Kibbe deliberately provoked many of the depositors against the cashier. The directors became involved in this quarrel, for a majority of the board disagreed with Kibbe on the manner in which he was running the bank. At a full board meeting, and in the presence of Kibbe, the directors aired their grievances; then all but two of the board members voted to dismiss Kibbe as president.

After the board removed him as president, Kibbe, his friends among the directors, and their associates openly declared war on the bank. They gathered Niagara notes, returned them to the bank and demanded immediate payment in specie. The institution withstood this deliberate run in July 1818, as well as its continuation the following month.¹⁷

In addition to the local pressure against the bank, the story gained currency that outside forces, too, sought the destruction of the Bank of Niagara. Some people accused William Kibbe, President of the Ontario Bank at Canandaigua and brother

15. Ellicott to Busti, August 24, 1817, March 31, 1819; William Peacock to Ellicott, July 10, 1818; *Niagara Patriot*, May 26, 1818.

16. Hammond, *History of Political Parties in the State of New York*, I, 323-339; Ellicott to Busti, May 19, 1819.

17. Ellicott to Busti, August 28, 1818, May 19, 1819.

of Isaac, of using his bank's funds against the Niagara Bank "in a very secret manner." William Kibbe flatly denied these accusations and added that he had not "taken any part in the quarrel" between brother Isaac and cashier Leake. The Ontario Bank president blamed the Utica Bank and its branches for these attacks against the Bank of Niagara. As evidence of the good faith of the Ontario Bank, the directors of that institution planned to discuss a loan of some "four or five thousand dollars in specie" to the Niagara Bank in order to help that bank to redeem Niagara paper. William Kibbe confided to Archibald S. Clarke, Ellicott's dependable friend, that Isaac "must withdraw" from the bank as a director because of the powerful opposition to him. At the same time, Kibbe offered his opinion that Isaac would leave Buffalo if he could sell his stock and property. Clarke agreed with this view and advised Ellicott that "we had better purchase" Isaac's stock and land if he would "give a pledge to cease hostilities to the bank."¹⁸

Faced by Isaac Kibbe's intransigent attitude, a divided board now beseeched Ellicott's aid in this desperate fight for the survival of the bank. In July 1818, seven of the thirteen directors offered a directorship to Ellicott and explained their move "as a measure tending to raise the respectability and promote the welfare of the institution." Later that same month, the board elected Ellicott president.

Ellicott accepted the presidency of the Bank of Niagara with misgivings, since his contract with the Company forbade him from holding other offices. Thus he had to explain promptly to his employer, Busti, the reasons for his acceptance of this appointment. This he did by pointing out that in the first place, the board elected him "without my knowledge"; further, "it was with some difficulty that I could

prevail upon myself to accept" the office. When he agreed to become president, he did so "with an understanding that I should be at liberty to resign after the next election of directors in November . . .". Ellicott concluded his explanation to Busti by saying:

I want no office of any description; my ambition is fully gratified with that of agent of the Holland Company. I should not of [*sic*] accepted it, but I was told my name at the present time would be advantageous to the Institution.¹⁹

As president, Ellicott briefed himself on the condition of the Bank of Niagara by getting the subscription list. In so doing, he learned more accurately just how badly many of the directors had exploited the bank. Ellicott substantiated the story that several of the directors and subscribers had borrowed money from other banks and used these loans to buy stock in the Niagara Bank. Then, as stockholders, they had put up their Bank of Niagara stock as collateral to borrow large sums from the Niagara Bank; and, with the money they thus received, they repaid their original loans to the other banks. In some cases, the Bank of Niagara officials had loaned to such individuals larger sums than these stockholders had invested in the bank's stock. As a matter of fact, comparatively few people with real capital had purchased Niagara Bank stock.

To improve the conditions of the bank, Ellicott insisted that sound financial principles should guide its administration. He demanded a careful investigation of all requests for money before the bank granted them. He also insisted on the prompt collection of loans that the directors had already approved. This latter policy precipitated a bitter quarrel among the directors because several of them owed large

19. Board of Directors to Ellicott, July 3, 1818; Ellicott to Busti, August 24, 1818; Isaac Leake to Ellicott, July 17, 1818, C. W. Evans Papers, Buffalo Historical Society.

18. Archibald S. Clarke to Ellicott, July 26, 1818.

sums to the bank that they could not repay. Heretofore, the bank's attorney, Ebenezer Norton, made the decisions on the collection of debts; and as a rule, he favored those directors heavily in debt. This Ellicott determined to alter so that the president, and not the attorney, would decide what debts to collect.²⁰

Nothing came of several suggestions by Director Clarke to end the problems and the cleavage among the directors widened. Late in September, Camp and Heacock, two of the board members, "had a fisty-cuff." The following month, the directors at their board meeting again refused to eliminate the office of the attorney. In spite of the evidence of continued hostility, the Clarke camp began to feel optimistic about the situation, for Attorney Norton, sensing the growing opposition to his position, now seemed ready to give up his post. Clarke, by the middle of October, felt so secure about the bank's status, that he informed Ellicott: "We have never been in so good credit & if we lose it, it is our own fault." At the November bank election, "Kibbe & Co." did not make their appearance and all went off smoothly. As a result, the Clarke group gained positions in the organization that led it to believe that its members controlled the bank's operations.²¹

Suddenly, the condition of the bank grew worse. The day after the apparently placid directors' election in November, the Kibbe group planted an advertisement in the Buffalo newspaper to discredit the Bank of Niagara stock. In this notice, a Kibbe follower offered the sale of Niagara Bank stock for twenty-five per cent below par. When a purchaser appeared, however, the Kibbe representative hedged and

agreed to sell the stock only "at a less rate than 1 per cent and that in Specie." Two days after this, the New York City banks, along with those at Auburn and Canandaigua, demanded specie payment for Niagara notes on hand. At the same time, Myron Holley, a canal commissioner, withdrew the deposits of the Canal fund. This last act Leake attributed to the machinations of Isaac Kibbe and Ebenezer Norton. In desperation, Leake sought Ellicott's assistance, and requested that he influence the Holland Company to deposit additional specie in the bank.

The maneuvers of the Kibbe group exasperated Ellicott to such a point that in December 1818 he offered to withdraw completely from the Bank of Niagara. He made this proposal to Oliver Forward, a prominent citizen of Buffalo: Forward could buy all or a substantial part of Ellicott's six hundred and fourteen shares of Niagara Bank stock, but not fewer than three hundred of these shares. If Forward accepted, Ellicott would give him the dividends which he had not withdrawn on this stock. Further, Ellicott would resign his bank directorship in Forward's favor. But Forward did not buy Ellicott's stock, so the latter continued to try to restore the bank to prosperity.

Ellicott used various techniques to heal the split among the directors. To an individual detractor of the bank, like Ebenezer Johnson, he wrote a letter asking him to stop attacking the Bank of Niagara and criticizing his action as president. Ellicott stated that he had "never done" Johnson "a single injury," and that he had it "abundantly" in his "power" to retaliate. "Let us therefore unite," he urged, "in preserving that institution & establishing its credit upon a solid basis." Ellicott also tried to bolster the specie shortage in the bank by depositing there an additional thirteen hundred dollars in hard money.²²

20. William Kibbe to Ellicott, August 11, 1818; Ellicott to Busti, undated but probably May 31, 1819.

21. William Peacock to Ellicott, September 25, November 24, 1818; Isaac Leake to Ellicott, October 1, 1818; Archibald S. Clarke to Ellicott, October 2, 1818.

22. Ellicott to Oliver Forward, December 2, 1818; to Ebenezer Johnson, January 12, 1819.

In the overall struggle between the two factions, Ellicott asserted that he took "a straight forward course" without being partial to either one side or the other. He demanded that those bank directors who had been discounting for themselves had to pay their debts or agree to permit "three of their opponents . . . into the Direction." None of these directors resigned, however. In an effort to regain the confidence of the Buffalo depositors, Ellicott forced his brother Benjamin, William Peacock, and Jonas Williams to relinquish their board memberships in favor of respected Buffalo residents. Williams had been one of the original bank directors and Benjamin Ellicott and Peacock had accepted board positions after the bank had been in business. In their places, the directors elected Oliver Forward, Charles Townsend, and Samuel Wilkeson, all of Buffalo. By these moves, Ellicott hoped that he had reconciled the Buffalo depositors to the operations of the bank.²³

Still the opposition to the bank continued and demands now grew for the dismissal of Isaac Leake, the cashier. Forward urged Ellicott that the cashier be discharged, and even Peacock echoed him, but Peacock also observed that "nothing would satisfy Norton & Co. but the complete control of the Bank." Directors Clarke, Brisbane, and Camp cited evidence that the opposition to Leake's continuation as cashier did not stem from the Kibbe-Norton group alone. Those directors, normally loyal to Ellicott, claimed that they had heard board members Wilkeson and Forward declare at a board meeting that the plot to oust Leake originated with the cashiers of all the banks west of Utica, with the exception of the Bank of Geneva. Wilkeson and Forward, they reported, also stated at this meeting that this hostility would not cease so long as Leake was retained as cashier; but that

if the directors of the Bank of Niagara would consent to displace him "they [the cashiers] had the power to put an immediate stop to this annoyance and the injurious system should thereupon be discontinued." But Ellicott, loyal to the cashier, refused to participate in his ousting.²⁴

At a stormy directors' meeting on January 30, 1819, the board argued violently to remove Leake. "The bone of contention, or at least the pretended bone of Contention," reported Ellicott, "was the compelling the removal of the cashier." The debate over Leake brought out the conflicting ideas and deep emotions that had racked all the directors in the nearly two years of bank battle. Ellicott was torn between two extreme actions: to close the bank forever or to support its continued operation. These mixed emotions he described to his nephew, David E. Evans:

I must confess my feelings were in favor of winding up the concerns of the institution, which has been so long and so villainously persecuted by a few malcontents; but in reflecting [I realized] that we had exchanged considerable Niagara paper with the friends of the Bank for other paper to enable us to sustain it, on which they might have suffered a loss. Under all circumstances I was in favor of supporting it.

The newly elected directors, Wilkeson and Forward, became "immensely alarmed" when they learned that most of the board planned to close the bank. They wanted the bank to remain open because they held much of the bank's paper money; if the institution did not redeem these notes, they might well have been "ruined."

24. Oliver Forward to Ellicott, January 25, 1819, in C. W. Evans Papers; Peacock to Ellicott, January 26, 1819; Samuel Russell, Augustus Porter, Archibald S. Clarke, James Brisbane, John G. Camp to ?, January 29, 1819, in C. W. Evans Papers.

23. Ellicott to David Evans, January 13, 1819.

In an effort to place himself in the position of a non-partisan observer and to relieve himself of the great personal strain, Ellicott first resigned as a director. Then, after considerable discussion, the board, to the great relief of Wilkeson and Forward, accepted Ellicott's advice and voted to keep open the bank. Ellicott had also made the recommendation that the directors continue to employ Leake; this, too, the board endorsed. "The truth was," Ellicott reminded the directors, "any other course would have been an improper one."²⁵

While the resignation of Ellicott may have reduced personal animosities among the directors, within six weeks after that hectic January 30 board meeting, the Bank of Niagara's credit collapsed. Many of the banks east of Buffalo accelerated this fall when they returned so many Niagara Bank notes for payment that the institution soon had little specie left. The news of this shortage of hard money was reported in the *Columbian*, a New York City newspaper. With the publication of this item, the New York brokers refused Bank of Niagara paper at any discount. In March 1819, the Holland Company followed suit and did not accept Niagara Bank paper for dues or land purchase. Ellicott directed Goodwin and Peacock, the Company agents for Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties, to refuse that bank's notes until further notice. The Bank of Niagara thus paid the price for making too many loans on too little collateral, which in turn aggravated its serious shortage of specie. Although the Bank did not close its doors, the institution contributed little, if anything, to the economic progress of Buffalo from 1819 to 1825. Yet in its first two years of operation, the Niagara Bank had done much to revive the business economy that slumped so badly after the war. It had made it pos-

sible for many of the residents in western New York to pay their debts to the businessmen as well as to the Holland Company. The bank loaned money to the farmers despite their poor crops, and these tillers of the soil used the cash to buy necessities. In this way, the bank currency circulated freely and helped many people. The settlers would probably not have been able to have paid their debts to the extent that they did without the aid of the Bank of Niagara.²⁶

The quarrel over the Bank was not limited to questions of financial management. By 1819 Ellicott was convinced that Governor DeWitt Clinton had played a formidable, albeit backstage role in the struggle for control. Clinton had suggested Kibbe for the presidency and had benefitted by receiving many loans, and upon further loans being withheld had set his followers on the Board against Ellicott's. Thereafter men who supported Ellicott were denied political preferment by the Governor and it was the Governor's paper, the *Columbian* that had first published the declarations of the Bank's insolvency. Clinton's behavior so bitterly disappointed Ellicott that he broke with the Governor, and Ellicott's joining with Van Buren's Bucktail party was soon to set off a fundamental realignment of political forces in western New York.²⁷

26. Ellicott to Peacock, March 26, 1819; James Stevens to Peacock, March 8, 1819; Ellicott to David Goodwin, March 6, 1819; Verna G. Walker, "Banking in Buffalo before the Civil War," unpublished master's thesis, dated 1933, in the library of the University of Buffalo, pp. 17-18; Ellicott to Busti, January 31, 1817.

27. Ellicott to Busti, March 19, May 19, 1819; David Evans to Ellicott, February 5, 1819; Ellicott to Peacock, March 26, 1819.

25. Ellicott to David Evans, February 1, 1819.



Spring Brook Souvenir

by Frank J. Lankes

IT WAS in the year 1910 that I first visited Spring Brook. The vicinity of Northrup's Mills was a scene of appealing tranquillity at that time; while not exactly picturesque it had a quality of solid charm that is unforgettable. There was a stone dam across Cazenovia Creek about fifty yards downstream from Northrup Road bridge, a sawmill on the northerly bank and a grist mill on the other side. The bridge that spanned the mill pond was a light iron structure having a heavy plank floor.

The sawmill was equipped with two saws, one a large circular affair and the other a primitive reciprocating vertical blade type. Water turbines supplied direct power in both mills. I had never been inside the grist mill which was locked except when in operation. But the sawmill was always accessible through three large openings and we boys used it as a base while hiking and swimming over a weekend. Mr. Northrup gave us permission to sleep in the mill.

Sleeping was done on a platform about five feet wide and eight feet long which was used to hold odds and ends of mill gear. It was suspended under the roof about seven feet above the floor and directly over the circular saw. Some light was available up there from a small skylight set in the sloping roof. We moved the mill gear to one end, swept the platform clean with branches of brush and it was ready for service.

The boys who enjoyed going out there occasionally were from my old neighborhood of Madison and Beckwith Streets in Buffalo. We'd take the Jefferson trolley to Seneca Street, transfer and ride out to the City Line; there we boarded a Buffalo Southern trolley that carried us to District School No. 7 a bit beyond the covered

bridge road. From there it was about a two-mile walk to Northrup's Mills.

Seneca was brick paved as far as what is now Transit Road, beyond that it was macadam surfaced. During my boyhood Transit Road terminated at Clinton Street, it was not extended southward to cross Seneca until some years later. On the northeast corner of that present intersection once stood an old abandoned weather-beaten house believed to be haunted. We got into it several times and searched in the hope of finding hidden money.

One very warm Saturday afternoon in August three of us went out to the mill to spend the night. It was a thirsty walk for the last mile and a relief to toss our gear up to the platform and go to the spring for water. For that purpose I had an old style Army canteen on a shoulder strap.

The spring issued from shale at the base of a cliff on the south bank of the creek about a quarter of a mile below the dam. All three of us made the walk only to find three people already there waiting for water which dripped into a stone crock used as a catch basin. We didn't await our turn but walked back above the bridge to a place where a spring was thought to come up from the creek bed — the water was cooler there. So we drank "branch" and filled the canteen. In our strolling about we visited the spring several times but someone was always there waiting for water.

At about six o'clock we started a small driftwood fire on the shale bed of the creek below the dam, grilled some bacon on sticks and ate it with bread. We lounged about after sundown and at early dark climbed up to the platform to make a night of it, lying awake for a time, talking

[One Hundred Seven]

and listening to the occasional rumble of a wagon crossing the bridge until sleep came.

During the night we awakened thirsty — moonlight was streaming through the skylight. One of the boys had a watch — it was twelve o'clock. Taking the canteen two of us walked to the spring. The moon was high and bright, the night air pleasant and the crock brimming with cold water. We quenched our thirst, filled the canteen and returned to our comrade.

My partner of the walk climbed up to resume his sleep but I did not do so immediately. There was a door about five feet high and twelve feet wide that was hinged at the top edge and hooked up to keep open; it was on the creek side and furnished light for working in the mill. I sat in that opening for a time, fairly enchanted by the beauty of what I saw and heard — a big moon in a cloudless sky, the

placid surface of the mill pond, a slight swishing of water slipping over the dam, frogs croaking occasionally, tree toads trilling and other tiny creatures sounding in a humble and persistent chorus that has always been music to me. Down through troubled years the memory of that serene night has repeatedly returned, always awakening a sense of thankfulness for having lived in those faraway quiet years the like of which we'll never have again.

It was about the year 1926 that high flood waters brought trees and other debris to bear against the bridge, increasing pressure until the bridge was swept from its piers and carried away. In passing it demolished the dam and damaged both mill foundations. The mills gradually fell into a state of ruin and now only a few scattered photographs remain as souvenirs of that once lovely scene.

Wonderful Preservation

by Julia Hull Winner

ONE OF THE strangest tales in the annals of disasters on the Great Lakes is that of a woman who was imprisoned for five days in a capsized schooner on Lake Erie, and survived to tell the tale.

It was a Wednesday, the 4th of September, 1833, that the schooner "New Connecticut" left Conneaut, Ohio, bound for Buffalo with a cargo of wheat. The craft was owned jointly by Isaac S. Smith and the Captain, Gilman Appleby of Conneaut. However, on this trip the Captain was not aboard as he was also in charge of the construction of a new steamboat, the "North America", then being built in Conneaut. But his aunt, a Mrs. Appleby, was on board.

Mrs. Appleby had been visiting relatives in Erie and Conneaut and had decided the time had come for her to return to her home at Colden, near Griffin's

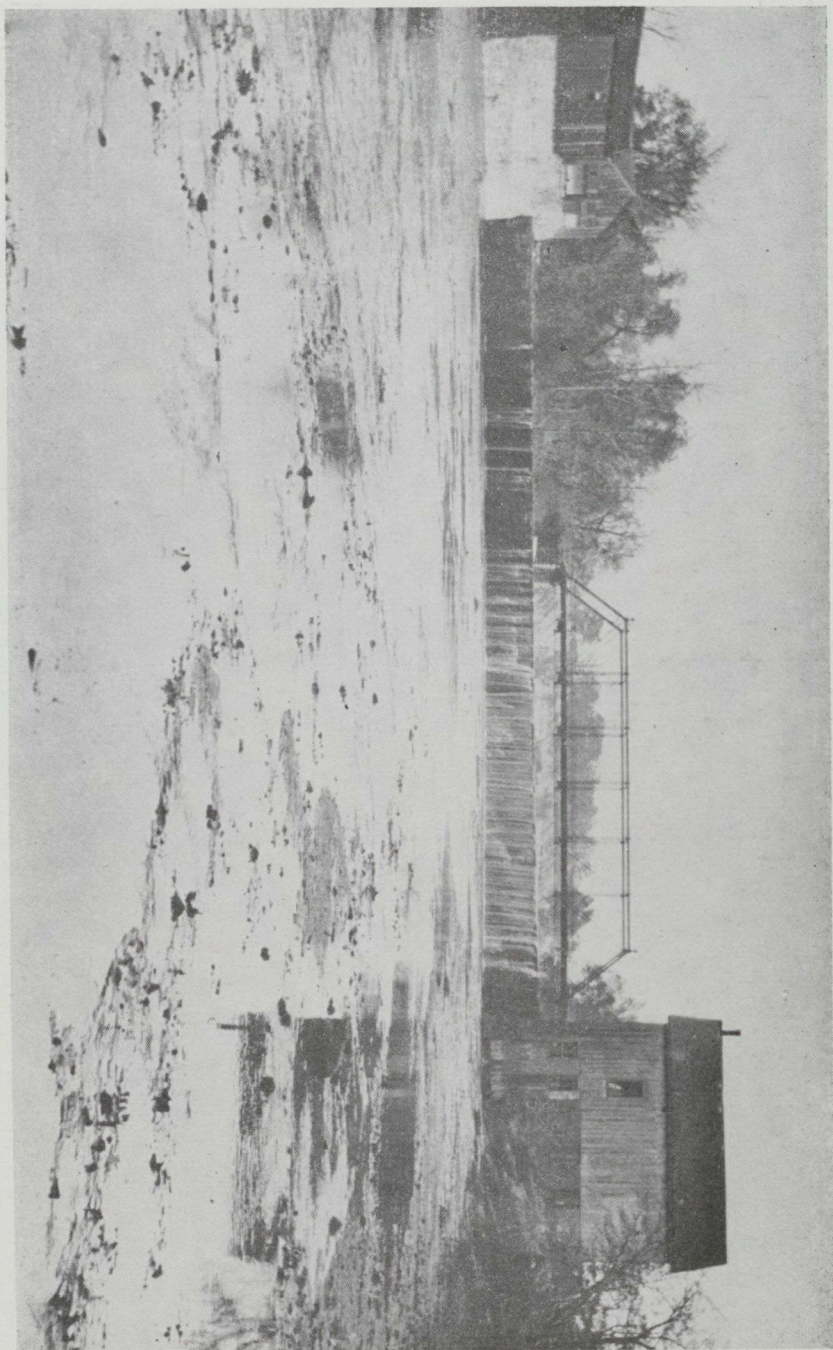
Mills, Erie County, New York. So, although the Captain had asked her to wait until he should be sailing, at her insistence he permitted her to go in the care of his crew.

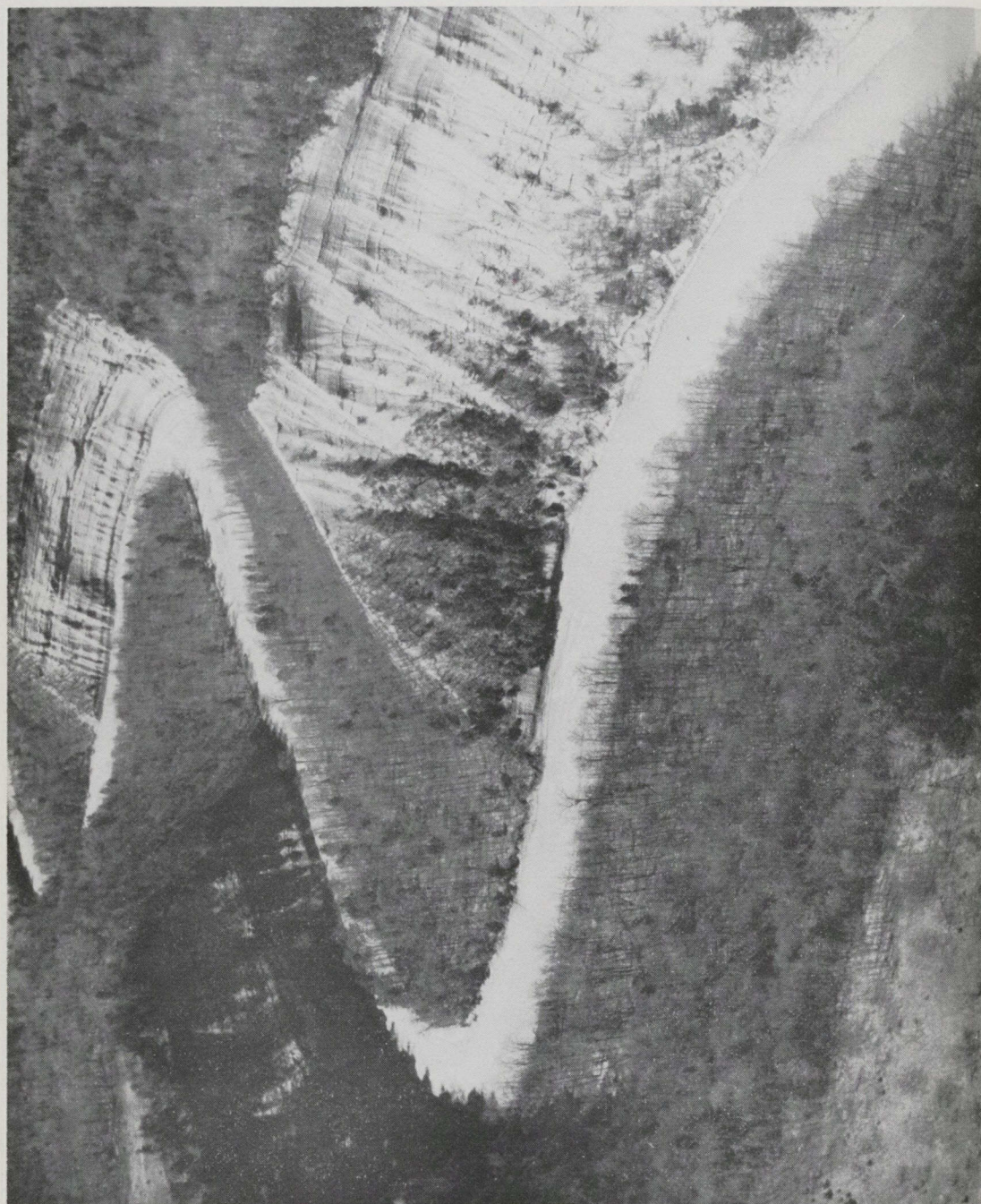
All went well as they sailed past Erie and past the New York line. But in the evening as the vessel was some two miles off shore about opposite Portland Harbor, disaster struck. A sudden squall caught the crew by surprise and before they could move to avert it, the vessel was capsized. The crew managed to float the ship's yawl, and presuming that their passenger had been drowned, since she had been in the now submerged cabin, they made their return to shore and returned to Conneaut where the tragedy was reported to Captain Appleby.

A few days later the steamboat "William Peacock" stopped at Conneaut en-

[One Hundred Eight]

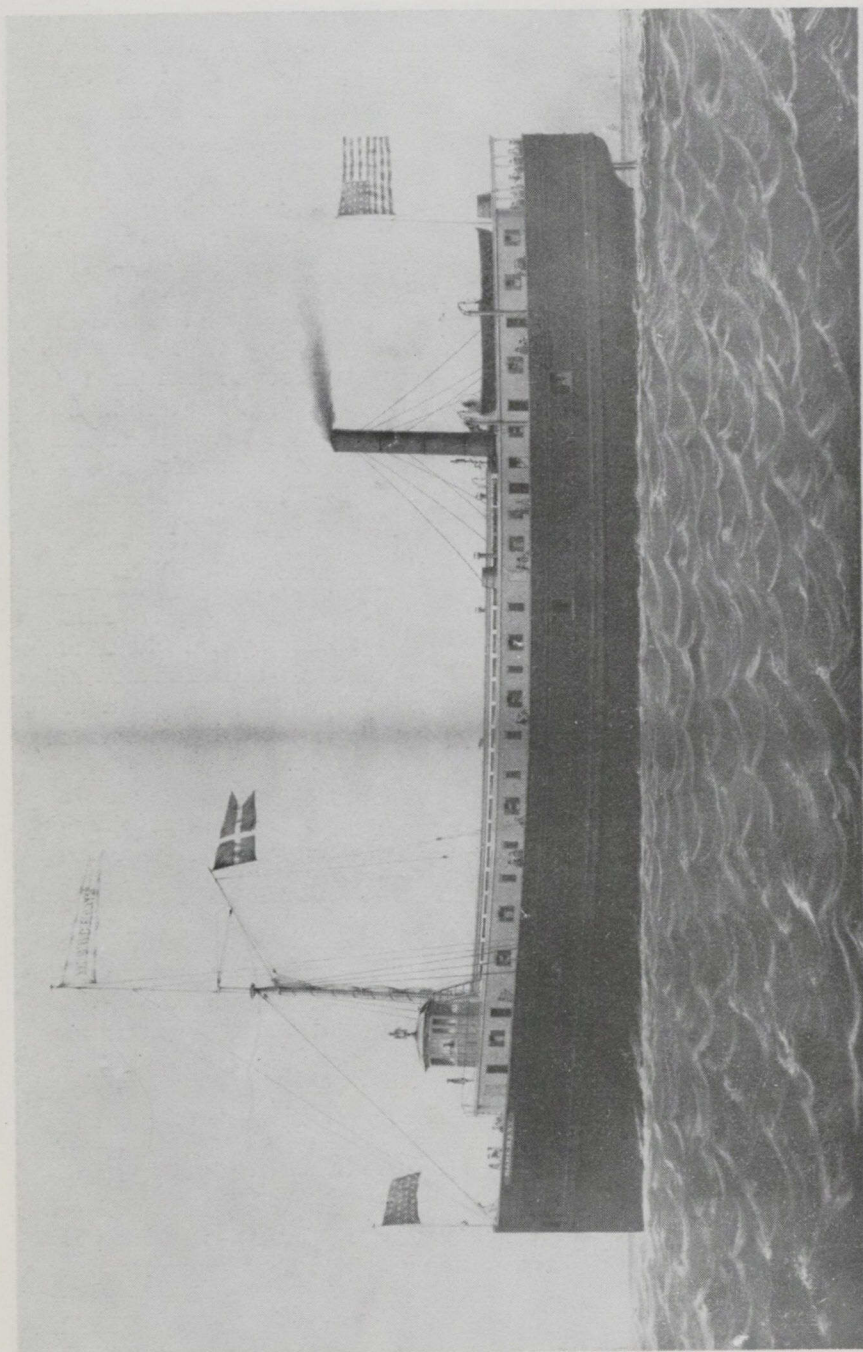
Spring Brook and Northrup's Mills before destruction wrought by the 1926 flood. Photograph by George Elliott.







[One Hundred Eleven]



TOTAL LENGTH
200 FEET
BREADTH 35 FEET
DEPTH 14 FEET
REGISTERED TONS 1,000
REGISTERED GROSS TONS 1,000

(THE SHIP LINE IS OF BUFFALO, N. Y.)

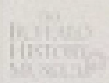
TROY STEAMER DECEMBER,

ALBERT BRUBBES COMMANDER.

BUILT FOR J. C. B. EVANS BY DAVID BELL BUFFALO, N. Y. 1892.

ONE DIRECT ACTING
COMBUSTIBLE ENGINE
DIAMETER OF CYLINDER 30 IN
LENGTH OF CYLINDER 30 IN
DIAMETER OF BOILER 30 IN
DIAMETER OF PIPES 10 IN

Colored lithograph produced in Buffalo to celebrate an achievement of Buffalo's shipbuilding industry.



route from Detroit to Buffalo. Captain Appleby wished to recover his aunt's body, and so asked Captain Wilkins of the "Peacock" to be on the watch for the capsized schooner.

Captain Wilkins did discover the schooner floating on its side not far from the place where it had capsized. His first mate, William Henton, boarded the floating wreck with some crew members to make a search for Mrs. Appleby's body. Mr. Henton employed a pole to reach inside the cabin in an attempt to dislodge the body which might have been caught there. The pole caught on a mantle and a bed which he hooked out, but that seemed to be all he could dislodge. So assuming that the body had floated away earlier, the men went back to the "Peacock" and resumed their journey to Buffalo.

Meanwhile, when the schooner had capsized, Mrs. Appleby had clung to the front of her berth. She found it made her a sort of seat so that she could sit or stand as she chose. The water rose to her waist and sometimes to her shoulders and neck as the waves tossed the craft in its drifting about. When the "Peacock's" mate had thrust the pole into the cabin she had seen it, and with a broom handle had struck the pole and asked if she could take hold of it. This she could easily have done, but hearing the man answer "No", she assumed he had heard her and so waited for further developments. The crewman's negative answer was not addressed to her, however, since he had not heard her voice, but was in answer to someone asking if the body had been found.

Mrs. Appleby's spirits were kept up by noises she assumed were workmen attempting to rescue her but in reality were only the clanging of barrels and other debris rubbing together in the rocking of the wreck. Her only nourishment was a cracker and an onion which she found floating in the water, and a canister of tea.

It was on Monday, although she could not have known what day was terminating her long imprisonment, when Captain Appleby reached the wreck with equipment and men to right his capsized schooner. As the men tilted the schooner to raise it to its upright position, Mrs. Appleby's situation became alarming since the water rose in the cabin, diminishing her air pocket. She knew she would have to make her escape at once, and fortunately she could see the companionway within two feet of the surface of the water.

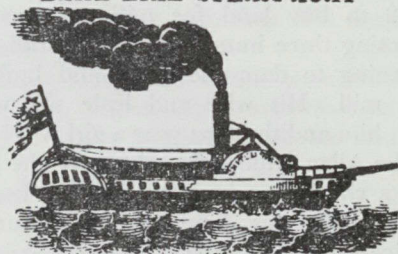
She took a deep breath, plunged in, and failed. A second time she tried but again failed. She gulped a deep breath in the small remaining pocket of air, dove in determinedly a third time, and reached the companionway and freedom.

As the vessel careened to a nearly level position the soggy apparition made its appearance up the companionway, where she was caught by the amazed Captain Appleby. Her son, who was present, wept with joy at her appearance while the shocked sailors screamed at the apparent rising from the dead.

Mrs. Appleby was taken to the house of Eliphalet L. Tinker at nearby Portland Harbor, where citizens of that place vied with those of nearby Westfield in giving her the best care possible. It was reported in the *Buffalo Bulletin* of September 1833 that "she is fast recovering, and will soon be able to return to her family."

1825.

LAKE ERIE STEAM-BOAT



SUPERIOR,

[One Hundred Thirteen]

Zoar Valley

by Bertha Ferrin

ZOAR is thirty miles south of Buffalo. It lies in the southeast corner of Collins and the northeast corner of Otto, the valley being divided by the waters of the Cattaraugus. In its primeval state the valley was beautiful, and when looked upon by the early pioneers from the surrounding hills it appeared to them a new Canaan and they entered into the valley as did the Israelites of old, with thoughts of rest and thanksgiving.

Many New England farmers had marched with the army of General Sullivan when it invaded the Iroquois country of central New York. Stories of the fertile lands and tremendous crops on the wide Indian farms were told. The stony fields of New England provided a scanty living and the people there wanted better farm land. They journeyed to Batavia, where the Holland Land Company offered land in western New York at a low price and on a long credit. Fine farm land was offered for \$2.00 an acre with only about \$10.00 to pay down for a time loan on a hundred acres or more. Those who decided upon this section of the Cattaraugus valley soon agreed upon the name.

"Zoar" is a Biblical name applied to a place of refuge. There was a "Zoar" in the hills above the Housatonic River in Connecticut and it is believed that Ahaz Allen, who came from there, gave the settlement its name here. He came in 1812 to buy land for milling purposes, choosing three hundred acres in Hidi and planning to dam the creek and build a saw mill. His wife and little son were with him and the next year a girl was born to the Allen family, thought to be the first white child born in Perrysburg or Persia.

Selecting this land was a fortunate choice for the settlers. The soil was deep, fertile, and without rocks. The creek furnished an ample water supply and the

small streams that flowed into it from nearby hills furnished water power. The forest of pine, oak, walnut, and hemlock which covered it provided material for houses and when burned, produced the first money crop, the potash "black salts" of the area. Basswood logs were hewed out to conduct water.

Since the valley is a five-and-one-half mile basin between the Otto, Frye and Coon hills it was relatively inaccessible, but there were several ways in. Many came first to the Land Office at Batavia and continued on the newly broken road to Buffalo Creek, where they turned up the Eighteen Mile Creek to Torrey's Corners (Boston) and climbed the long difficult hill which now carries the Trevett Road, and continued along its crest to Townsend Hill down which the way led to the Valley. Others turned at the Genesee Road and followed what was later to be the Allegany road through Arcade to Sardinia and the Valley.

Most had taken up land about and around what is now Springville, but some continued down the valley to the low lying alluvial flats. To reach these it was necessary to follow the creek to Frye Hill, then have the "Adams boys", who had preceded them, take their belongings in double canoes around the hill past the present day naturalists' Alexander Reserve to the flats. As late as 1816 no road had been laid out through the valley.

It was not uncommon for settlers to arrive by foot. Samuel Cochran walked from Vermont, took up land, built a cabin, and walked back to bring his wife and six-months-old child. They then came by way of the Trevett Hill Road where they were stopped by a fallen tree. In a heavy snow-storm he built a shelter by placing poles against the tree and covered them with hemlock boughs, cut basswood for his oxen

to browse on, and kept a fire in front of his shelter all night.

Despite difficulties the Valley filled rapidly. Settlers usually tried to arrive in spring so they could put in a crop. Land was cleared by cutting down trees and underbrush; they had brought with them potatoes, seed corn, beans, apple seeds and flax seeds, and they planted these among the stumps, digging up the soil with mattocks and hoes, and they had good crops. Later they made wooden plows equipped with iron mold boards which they brought with them.

Joseph Adams and son, Bliss, were the first settlers of Zoar. They came from Madison County in 1811 and they settled on Lot 20-6 R7, but moved to Cincinnati, Ohio in 1816. Other temporary settlers named Austin and Hyde, came in 1811 and shortly moved west.

Peter Pratt with his wife and ten children came in 1812. Joseph Bartlett came in 1813 and located on Lot 24 6R7. He built a log house and lived there till 1823, when he moved to the north side of the Creek.

Phineas Orr, a single man from New Hampshire, came in the spring of 1813 and located on Lot 1-6 R8. He built a log cabin on the Cattaraugus side of the creek. In the spring of 1814 he moved across the creek next to Peter Pratt, whose daughter Hope he later married. Orr became a general in the state militia. He and his wife are buried in East Otto.

Samuel Hill, a native of New Hampshire, emigrated to Canada, east from there to Sardinia. He and his wife, three sons (Jeheil, Asabel and Joseph), and two daughters came from Sardinia into Zoar down the Cattaraugus Creek in a canoe. At the time of their arrival (April 12, 1815) there were four families in Zoar. They moved into the log house built by Phineas Orr and bought a hundred acres of land where the widow Bruce lived later. In 1815 they bought land on the north side of the creek in Collins and built a

log tavern. Jeheil Hill became a man of influence in the Whig party of Erie County, and succeeded his father as Postmaster of the Zoar Valley Post Office. He was an officer of the State Militia and was promoted to General in 1824. Asahel Hill was Adjutant of the 19th Regiment and was Justice of the Peace in 1827. The third son, Joseph, was content to be a fifer in the 19th Regiment.

The "Hill Stand" (Inn as it was later called) was built by Samuel Hill in 1815 on the Erie County side near the present Zoar Bridge over the creek. The floor of the log tavern, or Inn, was of black walnut planks, 3 feet wide and 4 inches thick, and hewed on one side with a broad axe. The day it opened, nine persons, land lookers from the east, stayed there.

The Inn was a friendly place. Potatoes, Johnny cake, venison, and bear meat were the principal foods served. Travelers going through often stopped there a day or two. Joseph Hill was musical; he sang, played the violin, fife and drum. In the evening there would be music and dancing. The grand-daughter of the hosts, Alvira, has been told of the many happy evenings at the Inn. Joseph was one of the fiddlers whose playing for dancing on the green gave the name "Fiddler's Green" to present Springville.

There was ample room and pasture land nearby for cattle, sheep and pigs to graze for a day or so while their owners located tracts of land, or perhaps go on farther west. The four-horse-drawn "Troy" stage coach stopped there and it was naturally the first post office with Sam Hill the first Postmaster.

Among other early settlers were William Cook and Mason Hicks who located in Zoar in 1819, William Cook on Lot 21 with his brothers Silas and Esik, and Mason Hicks on Lot 23. Samuel Colvin with his wife and three children came from Washington County to Buffalo by canal and thence up the Cattaraugus Creek to Zoar. They located on Lot 47 where

John Colvin now lives. Alvin came in 1833 and located on Lot 46. Freeman came two years later. Samuel Cochran and his wife were descendants of a Scotch Huguenot family who had escaped from the massacre of St. Bartholomew in Europe. Samuel Cochran with some other Scotchmen came inland to Painted Post, Steuben County, looking for a home site. Dissatisfied with that location, they heeded the Holland Land Company's maps and circulars about Western New York. The section called "Cold Springs", now Springville, with plenty of water and at \$2.00 an acre looked good. He and a friend, Joseph Yaw, packed their belongings on a hand sled and followed a barely opened track indicated by blazed trees. Yaw was a surveyor and soon had a job from Joseph Ellicott of the Holland Land Company. Samuel Cochran built a shelter with no floor in it and went back and got his family in Vermont.

William White, a cattle driver, came from the (later) oil well section of Bradford, Pennsylvania. His great-grandfather was Isaac White of Whitestown, near Utica. William White came to Zoar in 1853 and bought 427 acres of land. He had four daughters and one son Almer, who married Jennie Baker, a teacher in the Zoar Valley. They had a son Dennis, and a daughter Minnie, who have furnished many of the facts for this essay. Minnie now lives one mile west of Collins.

William White in 1859 bought a beautiful house of Phineas Orr who had built it at the western edge of the Alexander Preserve. This house attracted wide attention. It had a quaint Victorian charm which has been preserved for posterity in Charles Burchfield's "Lavender and Old Lace", which has been displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Ownership of the house passed to others and to the Niagara Power Company along with many others in anticipation of flooding for a power dam. The house fell into neglect and ruin, and a

few years ago burned although the great barn still stands. The dam project was abandoned when engineers concluded that the soft stone of the creek banks wouldn't provide secure abutments.

Jesse Frye came in 1816 to Zoar and took up a large tract of land, Lot 29, including most of Frye Hill. He and his wife and five children came with wagon and horses and in 1826 he built a handsome brick house on the top of the hill, making the bricks from clay sand at the foot of the hill in the creek bank and using carpenters from Buffalo to help to build it. Inside the house every door is built so that its panels frame a cross. There are seventeen rooms and a very large kitchen. The floors are of wide planks, still good today. Water was piped from a spring high on the hill through logs carefully bored and painted red. Long iron rods held the house framing in place. The windows were small and were enlarged only within the past forty years. They were living in this house by 1840. The house is famous as likely the oldest brick house this side of Buffalo.

Jesse Frye planted a great orchard nearby and at one time there was a big mill and a cheese factory on his place.

About 1898 John Frye sold $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres to Mrs. Richardson for her son Arthur to drill for gas. The following formed a private gas company: Dr. Brooks, F. O. Smith, Ira Woodward, and Blakely. McIntyre of Gowanda was the driller. There was one well at first, then three, and gas was plentiful. Anyone who could afford to, piped it up to the village of Springville. Rates were twenty-five cents per thousand cubic feet. Some prospecting for gas was done in boats on the Cattaraugus Creek. The private gas company sold out to the Iroquois Gas Company later and Standard Oil leased land near by. Altogether ten or twelve gas wells were taken over by the Iroquois Gas Company in 1905. Pop Warner painted a picture of the first gas well in Zoar and

the painting now hangs in the Warner Museum, Springville.

History books are apt to slide briefly over the work involved in building pioneer homes. Axes of the settlers were clumsy and dull. When a tree was felled it had to be cut into usable lengths and the ends notched for joining. These logs had to be lifted shoulder high and rafters had to be fastened without nails. Some houses were covered with bark when finished.

The log cabins were soon supplanted by frame buildings of sawn lumber. Saw mills were built very early on the numerous small streams of the valley. They usually used a fast running side stream and built a raceway there. A mill was built by Joseph Adams in Zoar in 1814 and two more were shortly afterward built on Coon's Brook. These sawed the boards used for the siding on the big barn behind the Joslin and the Frye houses. The sills, sleepers and braces of these were made of 12" timbers, mostly more than 30' long, squared by an adze or broad-axe. Joints were mortise-and-tenon cut by heavy framing chisels and fastened by oak pegs.

Fire was carried in a brand from one house to another, as was the yeast needed for bread.

Back in the early days wolves greatly annoyed the settlers because of their attacks on sheep folds. These wolves inhabited the "West Woods", a tract of land lying west and northwest of Morton's Corners. A day was designated for a wolf hunt — the great Wolf Hunt of 1830. Men came from all around, between five and six hundred of them, but not a single wolf was caught. It was thought that they escaped into the Otto Woods. The early-day packs of wild dogs were not much better than the wolves.

By the middle of the last century Zoar was a thriving village. There were then eight frame houses and a school house on the south side of the Creek and nine houses and a school on the north side. There was a Post Office in the village

officially known as Zoar Valley Post Office. It stood at the junction of the present road across Zoar bridge and the main road, which was sometimes called "Westward Ho."

Some mail was delivered by the four-horse Troy stage coach on its way from Fiddler's Green (now Springville) to Aldrich Mills (now Gowanda). Also the route from Buffalo to Pittsburgh passed through Zoar Valley to Ellicottville. Mail was brought on horseback from Salamanca, East Otto, and also from Buffalo and Hamburg.

It was as much as fifteen or twenty years after the first settlement of Concord before the road from Springville to Morton's Corners was cut out. Previous to this the people of Morton's Corners and vicinity reached Springville by way of Townsend Hill.

There were twenty cheese factories in the vicinity, some in the valley and some outside. S. R. Smith was bookkeeper for Sam Vance's cheese factories. The Fries kept over one hundred cows and had their own cheese factory. From the cheese factories some cheese was hauled to Utica (a two-day trip), some to Cuba and thence to New York City. Ox teams drew the milk to the cheese factories.

Of the nine buildings which a hundred years ago stood on the south side of the Creek at Zoar, only three ruins remain. These are now reached from Zoar bridge by a narrow road, no better than those made by ox teams. Of the ten buildings which at that time stood on the north side, there now remains only the Frye house, the Zoar school house, and one other building now owned by Mr. Keen which may have been built by Phineas Orr. Some restoration of activity and prosperity occurred when the land taken up by the power company was resold. Dairying revived and truck farming flourished so that summer days reveal the bustle of harvesting by helpers brought from the city.

The Steamship "Merchant"

by Erik Heyl

THE FIRST iron-hulled steam vessel on the Great Lakes was the sidewheeler "Prince of Wales" ordered by Honorable John Hamilton. The hull was constructed and assembled at a British yard, dismantled and shipped in pieces to Kingston, Ontario, where she was launched in 1842. The hull was about 146 feet in length, with a tonnage of 200 tons register. The engine came out of the "Sir James Kempt". Most of the time "Prince of Wales" operated between Kingston, Ontario, and ports on the Bay of Quinte. In 1860 she was chartered for the accommodation of the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, during his Canadian and American visit. A few years later she was scrapped.

The next iron-hulled steam vessel was the British gunboat "Mohawk", also built in Great Britain and reassembled and launched at Kingston, Ontario, February 21, 1843. On December 6 of the same year the gunboat U.S.S. "Michigan", built at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was launched at Erie, Pennsylvania, to be followed by the launching of the U. S. Survey Steamer "Colonel Abert" at Buffalo, on December 21, 1843. "Colonel Abert" had been built and assembled at Cold Spring, New York, then dismantled, shipped via Erie Canal to Buffalo, where she was re-assembled. Though launched two weeks after U.S.S. "Michigan", the "Colonel Abert" made satisfactory trial trips from Buffalo to Point Abino and return on December 31, 1843 and again on January 8, 1844; not until some six or seven months later did U.S.S. "Michigan" undergo her trial runs. "Colonel Abert" was propelled by horizontal submerged sidewheels located in water-tight caissons on the bottom of the hull. The outer rim of each sidewheel projected beyond the sides of the hull into the water as far as the widths of the planks

or boards of the wheel. Although tried out on several other vessels this system of propulsion was highly unsatisfactory; too much power was wasted in churning around the mass of water in the caissons.

In 1843 U.S. Revenue Cutter "George M. Bibb" was built at Oswego, from plates and framing manufactured at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She was converted from a side-wheeler into a propeller in 1845. The lake survey vessel "Surveyor" was constructed at Erie from materials made in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; was sold at auction in 1878, renamed "Julia", and was listed as late as 1885. Another revenue cutter was constructed at Pittsburgh, and was launched 1844 at Oswego as U.S.R.C. "Jefferson". She was followed in 1846 by U.S.R.C. "Dallas", built at New York and assembled at Buffalo.

Nor were the Canadians behind in putting iron-hulled steamboats into service on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. In 1846 the famous "Passport", constructed at Dumbarton, Scotland, was assembled at Kingston, Ontario. She was followed in 1847 by the Dumbarton-built "Magnet", assembled at Niagara, Ontario, and in 1853 by "Peerless", also a Dumbarton boat and also assembled at Niagara, Ontario. In 1845 St. Mary's Foundry, Montreal, which was owned by the Molson Brewing interests and was operated as an adjunct to their brewery, constructed two iron-hulled steamers for a syndicate of Ottawa River lumber firms; one steamer was to operate on Lac Deschenes and the other on Lac des Chats, above the Chaudiere Falls on the river. The two boats cost about \$45,000, were put together in Montreal, taken apart and shipped by sleighs to Aylmer and Steen's Landings on the upper Ottawa and reassembled during the winter. Both boats went into service in June 1846.

[One Hundred Eighteen]

The above list includes all the iron-hulled steam vessels constructed for service on the Great Lakes up to 1862. In comparison with the total number of wooden steamboats and propellers built along the Great Lakes during the same period it is a minute quantity, less than 1%. There are two very cogent reasons for this discrepancy. First: the very much higher cost of an iron as compared to a wooden hull. The plates, frames, &c., all had to be transported at great expense from distant manufacturing establishments, there being no facilities in any of the lake ports for the rolling of plates and frames. The hulls had to be erected at the manufacturing site, taken down and then re-assembled where they were to be launched. Furthermore raw iron was far costlier than wood. Second: A nearly universal conviction, held by both ship builders and ship owners that iron hulls were more fragile than wooden hulls, that they were harder to repair and that they depreciated faster. For a good many years even marine insurance companies charged much higher premiums on iron vessels than on wooden vessels.

This state of affairs continued into the 1860's, when a Buffalo forwarding firm, J. C. & E. T. Evans, in co-operation with the Buffalo engine builder David Bell and the iron manufacturing company of Pratt & Letchworth, caused a complete revolution. These three firms collaborated in the designing, manufacturing and constructing the first iron steam vessel actually built on the Great Lakes. This was the "Merchant".¹

The keel was laid early in 1862 adjacent to the Ship Canal near Erie Street. In January 1862 Pratt & Co., of Black Rock, installed special machinery for the rolling

of 150 tons of boiler plate for the hull. The work proceeded somewhat slowly and it was not until the end of May 1862 that the outer plating was completed, although the heavier and larger parts of the engine and the boiler had been previously installed. The hull plating averaged 1/2-inch in thickness and was fastened together by six and one-half 3/4-inch rivets to each lineal foot. Starting from the keel the plates were alternately put over and under up to the bulwark. The vertical butts of the plates were double riveted through extra straps placed over the joints. Angle bars and bulb beams still had to be imported from Philadelphia.

The direct-acting condensing engine, having a cylinder forty inches diameter and a three-foot stroke, was set aft and connected by a propeller shaft thirty-one feet long to a four-blade propeller ten feet in diameter. Steam was generated in a return-flue boiler nineteen feet long and nine feet in diameter, with a maximum pressure of 50 pounds.

On July 12, 1862 "Merchant" was launched at 5 o'clock in the morning, this early hour being deliberately chosen to avoid the gathering of a crowd in the cramped space of the shipyard. Furthermore, as the canal was quite narrow, its sides had been lined with straw bales to absorb the bump and consequent damage to the hull and the canal bank should the hull get out of control. Everything went off as smooth as clock-work.

On August 1st, 1862 the job was complete and "Merchant", the first iron-hulled propeller built on the Great Lakes underwent her trial runs. On board were some two hundred invited guests, including the Buffalo Board of Trade, who were taken on a trip to Point Abino and return. "Merchant's" speed outward bound was about ten miles per hour; it was slightly more on the return trip. On August 2, 1862 she left Buffalo on her first regular trip for Chicago and intermediate ports, this being the established route of the Evans ves-

[One Hundred Nineteen]

1. The story of the "Merchant" is based upon a search of the *Buffalo Morning Express* from January 23, 1862 to August 2, 1862, and the *Milwaukee Sentinel* October 6, 1875 to November 3, 1875, as well as items to be found in the National Archives, Washington, D. C.

sels. During her entire existence she was not operated on any other run.

At some time in 1868 "Merchant" is said to have lost her way in a fog on the Detroit River and run ashore, where she sank in a shallow spot off Malden, Ontario. No mention of this incident is to be found in the contemporary newspapers; it may or may not have happened. If it did, she was back in service without much delay. In 1872 she was lengthened by thirty feet and most, if not all, of her deck-house was removed and passenger accommodations eliminated. She became a freighter, pure and simple. Additional cargo space was urgently needed and accommodations for passengers had become superfluous since the Evans firm had put into service the famous trio "China", "India" and "Japan", especially designed and built for cruises. After rebuilding, the "Merchant" went back onto her old run — Buffalo, Milwaukee and Chicago, on which she shuttled back and forth until the fall of 1875.

On October 5, 1875 "Merchant" arrived at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from Buffalo with a cargo of 1,000 barrels of cement, which were unloaded. She then continued on to Chicago. There she took on a cargo of 20,000 bushels of corn and a full load of flour, pork, flax-seed and other freight. She cleared Chicago for Milwaukee on October 6, 1875 on her last trip of the season. About 11 o'clock that night, with the second mate in charge, "Merchant" ran onto Racine Reef, off Racine, Wisconsin, and sank within fifteen minutes, having stove in her bottom. The apparent cause of the accident was that the vessel was off-set by a current that carried it too close to the reef. Luckily she settled with her deck above water, so that there was no loss of life.

On October 7, 1875 the rescue tug "Hagerman" was despatched with pumps to the scene of the wreck with three steam pumps and a scow in tow. A tug with additional pumps and a diver was also des-

patched from Chicago, while the tug "Wetzel" from Racine towed another vessel to the stricken propeller, onto which a portion of the cargo was transferred. The stern of "Merchant" was in 13 feet of water. Additional cargo was transferred out of her during the next few days but salvage operations had to be suspended on October 10, 1875 because heavy seas were running. The rescue tug "Rescue" continued to stand by, but ten steam pumps put aboard the "Merchant" were unable to make the least headway. The hull was being twisted by an increasing gale and showed signs of considerable damage about the decks, which were now being crowded upwards amidships.

On October 15, 1875 "Rescue" returned to Chicago, not wanting to be caught in a heavy northeaster. However one more trip was made to the "Merchant", when the wreck was stripped of everything movable, including furniture, chairs, supplies, anchor, chain, &c., which were brought to Chicago on October 20, 1875. On November 2, 1875 Captain Robinson of Buffalo with half a dozen divers visited the wreck of the "Merchant". They found her broken in two, the mast having gone down thru the hull. She was pronounced a total loss and abandoned. Some time later her engine was recovered and placed in the new steamer "A. L. Hopkins".

In conclusion it may be stated that it was the very satisfactory performances of "Merchant" that induced the Evans firm to order the iron passenger liners "China", "India" and "Japan", and in addition the iron freighters Alaska, Arabia, Russia, Cuba, Java, Scotia were built for Holt & Ensign's Commercial Line. All of these propellers proved to be highly successful vessels.



Books You May Want to See

Baseball: The Early Years. By Harold Seymour, Pp. x, 373; illustrations. New York, Oxford University Press, 1960. \$7.50.

It would be difficult to think of a popular American institution whose history has been as poorly told as baseball's. The game's origins have long been cloaked in myth and legend. Typical is the fable that baseball was invented at Cooperstown in 1839 by Abner Doubleday. Its development as the national pastime and its growth into semi-big business status in the latter part of the nineteenth century are stories that have never been told with any degree of completeness or accuracy. This deficiency has been partly due to the fact that the men who ran baseball made little or no effort to preserve the records, documents and other historical evidence so vital to the careful researcher. The result has been a succession of books based on reminiscences, hearsay, and hand-me-down information. Countless other books, covering the lives of famous players (many of them ghost-written), or retelling the histories of the various teams, have added little to our knowledge of baseball history.

The reviewer would be unfair if he failed to point out that there have been some excellent baseball books written. In *Ball, Bat and Bishop* Robert W. Henderson traces the origins of baseball to Europe and completely destroys the Cooperstown myth. Lee Allen (*One Hundred Years of Baseball*) and Robert Smith (*Baseball*) have both written accurate and readable histories of baseball for the popular market.

Dr. Seymour's book, which carries baseball from its beginnings up to the year 1903 and is the first of two projected volumes, is the first attempt to write a scholarly history with the primary emphasis on the economic and sociological development of the game. This is not to say

that he has neglected the players, the managers, the umpires, and the other colorful figures that baseball attracted; but in this book they take a back seat to the clubowners, league presidents, and promoters who in a much much greater degree determined the course of baseball history. And it must be said that many of the men in this latter group were just as picturesque as the King Kellys, Cap Ansons, and Jim O'Rourkes who starred on the diamonds. Chris Von der Ahe, for example, the tragicomical owner of the old St. Louis Browns, successfully combined his beer garden and his baseball operations for a number of years, but on one occasion late in his career wound up in a Pittsburgh jail.

This book is the fruition of more than ten years of research and is the outgrowth of the author's doctoral thesis at Cornell. It is interesting to note that Dr. Seymour had a difficult time convincing the history department at Cornell that this was a fit subject for his thesis. Dr. Seymour's work will appeal to many baseball lovers, but it is not primarily aimed in their directions, for it is a genuine piece of Americana containing elements of attraction for every history buff. The book should be of particular interest to Buffalonians, since Dr. Seymour was formerly on the staff at the University of Buffalo and is still a member of the Buffalo Historical Society. In addition, the book contains numerous references to Buffalo and the considerable part it played in the history of professional baseball. It was in Buffalo, for example, that the baseball's controversial reserve clause was formulated in 1879. The author makes no secret of his opposition to this particular feature of the baseball contract which binds a player irrevocably to the club that owns him; but like so many of its critics, he has been unable to suggest a workable substitute.

[*One Hundred Twenty-one*]

The author has done a particularly outstanding bit of research and writing in the early chapters telling of the organization of the first amateur teams, made up of the refined young gentlemen of that pre-Civil War era. One gets the impression that Dr. Seymour regrets that the game ever evolved from this genteel state to a professional sport. However, and this is one point that he does not make, the game never did completely lose its pure status, for today many thousands play it in the schools, colleges, little leagues, and in the public parks — all untainted by professionalism.

Among its other excellent qualities, the book has an uncanny timeliness about it. All during the game's history, there have been attempts to form new leagues, just as the Continental League is trying to do today. Many of the problems, such as Player Sources, places to play, territorial rights, and intra-club squabbles, were present in those days just as they are today. What Dr. Seymour has to say about the formations of the National League, the American Association, the Union Association, the Players' League, and the American League should be required reading for all those who espouse the cause of the Continental League.

There is no doubt in my mind that Dr. Seymour's *Baseball* will become the definitive work in its field. It is authoritative, accurate and skillfully written. In a sense it is iconoclastic, for it opens the cold pages of history on events and men who have been painted in brighter hues than they should have been. But in doing this, the author is always fair, never revealing just one side of a story.

As one who has a great interest in baseball history, I want to say that I have been thrilled by this book. I heartily recommend it to every history lover — baseball fan or no.

JOSEPH M. OVERFIELD

Kenmore

[One Hundred Twenty-two]

Housewives' Guide to Antiques. By Leslie Gross. Pp. 180. New York: The Exposition Press, 1959. \$4.00.

The 180 pages of this little book cover an amazingly wide territory. Antique-wise, many subjects are covered in a delightful and informative manner. The text is supported by several hundred pen sketches of articles of furniture, glassware, pewter, china, ironware, brassware, etc., ranging from the Queen Anne Period to the end of the Victorian Period at the turn of the century.

The author also covers American primitives involving both furniture and art. Really, this guide book is many books wrapped in a single package.

The language of the book will delight the beginning collector to whom the volume is addressed. During the past few years, the reviewer has seen a number of primers devoted to antiques. He must confess that this book tops them all. Physically it is not a masterpiece of printing but it is full of meat and bones for those who wish to collect antiques of any kind or any period which relates to the American scene to 1900.

It's a handy pocket reference that may be carried about and used when the beginner visits antique shops; especially those whose proprietors are apt to take full advantage of the gullibility of the beginning collector. And, "let's face it", such dealers do exist. The informed collector does not face such risks. With this small volume, anyone can become an informed collector.

RAYMOND F. YATES

Lockport

Years of Trial and Triumph. By Joseph M. Overfield. Pp. 54. Privately Printed for the Buffalo Baptist Association. 1960. \$.75.

Here is a mature outline of the history of the first hundred and fifty years of the Buffalo Baptist Association. It brings into

clear view the genius for independence in togetherness for which the people of this denomination are justly famed. As one might expect, the emphasis in this account of the Baptist movement on the Niagara Frontier falls on the people's purpose to achieve a goal and maintain an attitude whatever adverse situations might arise. In achieving this they passed through repeated times of trial and hours of triumph.

Mr. Overfield, a layman of Lafayette Avenue Baptist Church, shows us how, from the days when the disciples of independence in togetherness invaded our territory singly and on horseback, following the lead of the Reverend Elkanah Holmes in 1800, to the present hour, basic Baptist principles have worked out through diligent application of them in the concrete situations in which the brethren have found themselves from time to time through fifteen decades. He traces this application of principle through the founding of the first churches, the founding of the Baptist Association, the life of the early country churches and the development of the city churches, the period of progress and crisis, the middle years of the Association, and to this present hundred and fiftieth year of experiment and adventure.

Complete independence of the local church which seeks and maintains association with other churches may seem a somewhat paradoxical order of things. It ceases to seem such "when a happy balance is struck between the functions of the association and the authority of the local church". Mr. Overfield observes:

the plan has worked out well. Associations are necessary to satisfy the natural tendency for fellowship of those of like belief. They are necessary for the accomplishment of any concerted program in the fields of evangelism and missions. Individual churches cannot start colleges, build new churches, or send missionaries to India.

Mr. Overfield has done a good piece of research and writing. The Reverend John W. Poorman, Executive Secretary of the Buffalo Baptist Association, has furnished the Introduction.

BRUCE SWIFT

Hidden America. By Roland Wells Robbins and Evan Jones. Pp. 259, illustrations. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1959. \$5.00.

This is a book to whet the appetites of amateur archaeologists everywhere, as well as a valuable source of information on the proper procedures involved in this increasingly popular hobby.

In factual but enthusiastic vein, the authors cover various excavations of their own, ranging from the search for historic landmarks on the American scene, to investigation of pre-Columbian rumors and traces of the earliest inhabitants of our continent. While no one phase is dwelt upon at undue length, it is evident that considerable research went into the entire presentation, and for a housepainter-turned-archaeologist, Mr. Robbins seems to have made remarkable progress.

Dedicating the volume to "The men who did the digging —", the authors state their intentions by labelling the book "an attempt to map the frontiers in American archaeology — and to show more Americans the genuine excitement to be found in digging".

This they proceed to do, Mr. Robbins' admitted "abiding preoccupation" with archaeology being apparent in every paragraph.

For all his enthusiasm, Mr. Robbins' approach to his subject is scholarly, and he stresses the importance of thorough research before digging, recommends careful reconnaissance of the terrain involved, including use of probe rods, offers advice on the grid system of sinking test holes, discusses stratigraphy, and states un-

[*One Hundred Twenty-three*]

equivocally that "Notes (on recoveries) cannot be too exact".

He also gives worth-while pointers in regard to tools and actual digging procedures, care and preservation of artifacts, and even includes some advice on methods of maintaining cordial relations with the Public. He also mentions "Hermeneutics", or, the art of not being fooled, and cites several celebrated hoaxes, such as the Cardiff Giant, as warnings.

Remarking that history, as represented by legends and the written word, is sometimes inaccurate, Mr. Robbins stresses his conviction that historians and archaeologists should "walk hand in hand" for best results, particularly when solving local historical problems.

It should, perhaps, have been noted, in the reference to probing, that there is considerable danger to the novice in this method; should the rod break, when pressure is being applied at an angle, impalement of its user is possible. Another rather important omission occurs in the comments on locating sites, in which no mention is made of the evidence given by the appearance of dark areas in cultivated soil.

On the whole, however, it would be difficult to criticize *Hidden America* adversely; the book is interesting and refreshing because its authors obviously enjoy their subject immensely, and such pleasure is contagious.

RICHARD L. MC CARTHY

In city after city the "great houses" of the 19th-Century and earlier have disappeared so that we might have more office buildings which are monotonously alike and more apartment houses that please the eye only so long as the paint is fresh. "Because it's old, it's good" is an absurd proposition. But is this nation so rich in evidence of history and of beauty to justify indiscriminate and ruthless razing of the past?

The Issue's Authors

"My chief joy in this historical field is research," declares JULIA HULL WINNER, whose first contribution to *Niagara Frontier* appears with this number. Old newspapers are the most fascinating sources to her, as to many another historian who finds his search growing slower and slower as sidelights keep dazzling his sight. Mrs. Winner is Historian of the Town of Roy-alton, Niagara County and Deputy Historian of the County as well. She is active in many historical societies and has published extensively in their journals. "On the personal side," she concludes, "I have four married children who have presented us with twelve grandchildren."

BERTHA FERRIN is Mrs. Fred J. Ferrin of Springville, a person well known there for many years for her devotion to the history of the area. She has been an officer of the Concord Historical Society and has been constantly active in developing the museum of that Society in Springville. Readers will appreciate having their attention directed to the fascinating valley of the Cattaraugus to the south of Buffalo.

ERIK HEYL has continued to be in evidence for his constant devotion to lake marine history. Of his latest contribution to these pages he writes: "I particularly wish to extend my thanks to Mr. Paul G. Sotirin, Librarian of the Marine Collection of the Milwaukee Public Library for his generous and helpful co-operation."

NEW REPUBLIC, January 11, 1960